

Notice of Meeting and Agenda Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 29 August 2023	10:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

MARK CONAGHAN
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Councillor Andy Steel (Convener): Councillor Michelle Campbell (Depute Convener):

Councillor Alison Ann-Dowling: Councillor Stephen Burns: Councillor Graeme Clark:
Councillor Andy Doig: Councillor Neill Graham: Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes:
Councillor Colin McCulloch: Councillor Jamie McGuire: Councillor Marie McGurk:
Councillor Iain McMillan: Councillor John McNaughtan: Councillor Iain Nicolson:
Councillor Jim Paterson:

Hybrid Meeting

Please note that this meeting is scheduled to be held in the Council Chambers. However, it is a hybrid meeting and arrangements have been made for members to join the meeting remotely should they wish.

Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online

at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>

For further information, please email
democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

Webcasting of Meeting

This meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site – at the start of the meeting the Convener will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. To find the webcast please navigate to

<https://renfrewshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Members are asked to declare an interest or make a transparency statement in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest or the transparency statement.

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Report by Chief Executive.



To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 23 June 2023

1. Summary of Financial Position

- 1.1. The projected revenue outturn at 31 March 2024 for those services reporting to the Economy and Regeneration Board is an underspend position of £0.002 million (0.1%).
- 1.2. The projected capital outturn at 31 March 2024 for projects reporting to the Economy and Regeneration Policy Board is a breakeven position against the revised budget for the year of £43.201 million.
- 1.3. This is summarised in the table below and further analysis is provided in the Appendices.

Division	Revised Annual Budget £000	Projected Annual Outturn £000	Budget Variance (Adv) / Fav £000	Budget Variance %
Economy and Development	3,093	3,091	2	0.1%

Division	Revised Annual Budget £000	Projected Annual Outturn £000	Budget Variance (Adv) / Fav £000	Budget Variance %
Economy and Development	43,201	43,201	0	0%

2. Recommendations

2.1. Members are requested to:

- (a) Note the projected Revenue outturn position detailed in Table 1 above;
- (b) Note the projected Capital outturn position detailed in Table 2 above; and
- (c) Note the budget adjustments detailed at sections 4 and 6.

3. Revenue

- 3.1. The Revenue Budget Monitoring report at Appendix 1 identifies a projected underspend of £0.002 million (0.1%) for all services reporting to this Policy Board. Detailed division service reports can also be found here, together with an explanation of any significant projected variances.
- 3.2. The projected outturn is based on information currently available, and assumptions made by service budget holders. Any changes to these projections will be detailed in future reports to the Board.
- 3.3. The main reasons for the projected outturn position are indicated below the tables showing both the subjective analysis (what the budget is spent on) and the objective analysis (which division is spending the budget).
- 3.4. It is expected that Council will continue to maximise the drawdown from external funders to augment employability and wider regeneration programmes. This will supplement service and strategic investment budgets approved by Council resulting in a breakeven position for the Economic Development and Regeneration divisions, with no significant projected year end variances to report.

4. Revenue Budget Adjustments

Members are requested to note, from Appendix 1, that budget adjustments totalling £0.007 million have been processed since the budget was approved in March 2023, which relate to a minor realignment of employee cost budgets. A budget adjustment (net zero impact) has been processed to increase both income and expenditure to reflect funding secured from external sources to support the delivery of the employability programme over the course of financial year 2023/24.

5. Capital

- 5.1. The Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 was approved by the Council on 2 March 2023. For Economy and Regeneration the approved capital spend for 2022/23 is £43.201m.

- 5.2. The Capital Monitoring report at Appendix 2 indicates net budget adjustments to date in the 2023/24 approved capital programme for Economy and Regeneration of £4.073m, largely as a result of reprofiling budget from 2022/23 into 2023/24 for Paisley Museum and Paisley Junctions, partly offset by budget brought forward from 2023/24 into 2022/23 for Paisley Town Hall reflecting updated cashflows for the projects.
- 5.3. Further detail, including reasons for significant variances (where applicable), can be found at Appendix 2.

6. Capital Budget Adjustments

- 6.1. Since the last report, budget changes totalling £4.073m have arisen which reflect the following:

Budget reprofiled from 2022/23 into 2023/24 for updated cashflows (£5.661m):

- Paisley Art Centre (£0.404m);
- Flexible Outdoor Facility & Playing Fields (£0.199m);
- Paisley Museum (£2.560m);
- Town Centre Capital Fund & Place Based Fund (£0.529m);
- Paisley Learning & Cultural Hub (£0.416m);
- Paisley Junctions and Charging Hub (£1.040m);
- Townscape Heritage CARS 2 (£0.513m).

Budget brought forward to 2022/23 from 2023/24 to timing of work in late March 2023 rather than early April 2023 (£1.588m):

- Paisley Town Hall Redevelopment (£1.588m);
-

Implications of this report

1. **Financial** – The projected budget outturn position for the revenue budget reported to the Economy and Regeneration Policy Board is an underspend of £0.002m. Income and expenditure will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year and, where necessary, steps will be taken to mitigate any overspend.

The projected outturn position for capital budgets reported to the Economy and Regeneration Policy Board is breakeven. The Capital programme will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year.

Any changes to current projections in either Revenue or Capital budgets will be reported to the board as early as possible, along with an explanation for the movement.

2. HR and Organisational Development

None directly arising from this report.

3. Community/Council Planning

None directly arising from this report.

4. Legal

None directly arising from this report.

5. Property/Assets

The Capital expenditure in this board will result in improvements to Culture and Heritage assets and delivery of strategic place-shaping and regeneration.

6. Information Technology

None directly arising from this report.

7. Equality and Human Rights

The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety

None directly arising from this report.

9. Procurement

None directly arising from this report.

10. Risk

The potential risk that the Council will overspend its approved budgets for the year will be managed at a Council-wide level by the Chief Executive and Directors.

11. Privacy Impact

None directly arising from this report.

12. Cosla Policy Position

N/a.

Climate Risk

13. None directly arising from this report.

List of Background Papers

Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2023/24, Council 2 March 2023

Non Housing Capital Investment Programme, Prudential Framework and Treasury Management Strategy, and Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28, Council 2 March 2023

Authors: Valerie Howie, Finance Business Partner (Revenue) and
Geoff Borland, Finance Manager (Capital)

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 23 June 2023

POLICY BOARD : ECONOMY AND REGENERATION

Objective Summary	Approved Annual Budget	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget at Period 3	Projected Outturn	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Economy and Regeneration Management	146	0	146	144	2	1.4%
Economic Development	1,951	(51)	1,900	1,900	0	0.0%
Regeneration	989	58	1,047	1,047	0	0.0%
NET EXPENDITURE	3,086	7	3,093	3,091	2	0.10%

Objective Heading	Key Reasons for Projected Variance
Economy and Regeneration Management	No significant projected year end variances to report.
Economic Development	No significant projected year end variances to report.
Regeneration	No significant projected year end variances to report.

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 23 June 2023

POLICY BOARD : ECONOMY AND REGENERATION

Subjective Summary	Approved Annual Budget	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget at Period 3	Projected Outturn	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Employees	2,410	2,479	4,889	4,846	43	0.9%
Premises Related	(16)	0	(16)	(17)	1	6.3%
Transport Related	3	0	3	4	(1)	(33.3%)
Supplies and Services	30	0	30	30	0	0.0%
Third Party Payments	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Transfer Payments	970	(79)	891	891	0	0.0%
Support Services	40	0	40	40	0	0.0%
Depreciation and Impairment Losses	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
GROSS EXPENDITURE	3,437	2,400	5,837	5,794	43	0.7%
Income	(351)	(2,393)	(2,744)	(2,703)	(41)	(1.5%)
NET EXPENDITURE	3,086	7	3,093	3,091	2	0.1%

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY - NON-HOUSING SERVICES 1st April to 23rd JUNE 2023 POLICY BOARD: ECONOMY & REGENERATION											
Project Title	Current Year 2023-24						Full Programme - All years				
	Prior Years Expenditure to 31/03/2023	Approved Budget 2023-24	Budget Adjustments in 2023-24	Revised Budget 2023-24	Projected Outturn 2023-24	Budget Variance (Adverse) or		Total Approved Budget to 31-Mar-27 £000	Projected Outturn to 31-Mar-27 £000	Budget Variance (Adverse) or	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000						
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT											
Paisley Art Centre Redevelopment	1,170	1,435	404	1,839	1,839	0	0%	3,050	3,050	0	0%
Paisley Town Hall Redevelopment	17,132	6,256	-1,588	4,668	4,668	0	0%	22,050	22,050	0	0%
Flexible Outdoor Facility/Travel & Accessibility Infrastructure	485	1,150	22	1,172	1,172	0	0%	7,050	7,050	0	0%
Playing Fields and Sports Development	783	4,641	177	4,818	4,818	0	0%	5,600	5,600	0	0%
Paisley Museum	23,624	18,410	2,560	20,970	20,970	0	0%	45,522	45,522	0	0%
Town Centre Capital Fund	1,870	2,000	167	2,167	2,167	0	0%	4,037	4,037	0	0%
Paisley Learning & Cultural Hub	4,737	1,781	416	2,197	2,197	0	0%	7,000	7,000	0	0%
Place Based Fund	859	1,038	362	1,400	1,400	0	0%	4,427	4,427	0	0%
Paisley Junctions and Charging Hub	390	1,916	1,040	2,956	2,956	0	0%	3,346	3,346	0	0%
Townscape Heritage CARS 2	3,086	501	513	1,014	1,014	0	0%	4,099	4,099	0	0%
Total Economy & Development	54,136	39,128	4,073	43,201	43,201	0	0%	106,181	106,181	0	0%
TOTAL ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT	54,136	39,128	4,073	43,201	43,201	0	0%	106,181	106,181	0	0%

*Rolling programmes have a prior year year expenditure of £0 as the expenditure is not directly linked from one year to the next as a singular project.



To: Economy & Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29th August 2023

Report by: Programme Director, City Deal & Infrastructure

Heading: Cultural Infrastructure Programme Update

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report is to update the Board on the progress of Renfrewshire Council's Cultural Infrastructure Programme, being delivered on behalf of the Council by the City Deal & Infrastructure Team (with project management expertise from the Council's Property Services team) with the Paisley Museum Project being delivered by OneRen.
- 1.2. The Cultural Infrastructure Programme investment in Paisley town centre will use our internationally significant cultural and heritage story to transform our future for visitors and events within Scotland. This programme of work will bring new footfall and life to the town centre, new homes for top class cultural events, whilst preserving the heritage of the town.
- 1.3. As noted previously, the Cultural Infrastructure Programme has experienced significant impact from recent global events including the pandemic and war in Ukraine which has resulted in an economic challenge, particularly noticed in the construction industry. Completion of these projects are central to the recovery and inclusive growth of the Renfrewshire economy and Paisley Town Centre.
- 1.4. The programme continues to make positive progress through challenging times, and a significant milestone has been achieved with the completion of the main works construction at Paisley Town Hall. This project is now the first to progress to a carefully planned fit out period with the remainder of the projects following in a phased approach to ensure that resources internally at both Renfrewshire Council and OneRen, as well as specialist contractors, can deliver a high quality and efficient opening programme. This approach also allows each venue to be launched in its own right and contribute both individually and collectively to maximise the impact on Renfrewshire's cultural, events and heritage opportunities.

1.5. The very significant scale of the construction phase, coupled with the unprecedented challenges faced across the wider construction sector over the past number of years, has meant there has been an inevitable shift in the construction completion dates of each venue in contrast to that planned at the outset of the programme. However, projects continue to move at pace, and the Town Hall has successfully achieved the re-baselined completion date to allow a complex fit out period to deliver well in advance of hosting the Royal National Mòd in October 2023. The Paisley learning & Cultural Hub is expected to open later this year with the Arts Centre following thereafter.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Economy & Regeneration Board is asked to:

- i) Note the progress and current stage of construction of the projects outlined in this paper.
 - ii) Note the financial implications outlined at the end of this paper.
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3. Project Updates

3.1. Whilst each of the Cultural Infrastructure projects individually contribute to economic growth in Renfrewshire, it is important to note that the combined social and economic outcomes from across these investments are greater than the sum of the individual parts. Coupled with the Councils wider economic investments in city Deal, AMIDS, housing, and other regeneration projects, these social and economic outcomes for our local residents and visitors is enhanced further.

4. Paisley Town Hall Redevelopment

4.1. Paisley Town Hall main works construction contract successfully completed on 10th July 2023. The contractor retains a presence on site to complete finishing and snagging works and will complete all works by the end of August 2023. This is a major milestone which brings the completion of the first cultural infrastructure project within the ambitious programme.

4.2. The building has been carefully modernised whilst retaining its historic features and grand look. The capabilities of the building have been brought up to date to make it a digitally connected venue able to host various events that have never been possible in the town before. A full mechanical and electrical replacement has taken place throughout the building making it more efficient and capable of supporting both staff and customers.

4.3. The venue offers significantly improved access for events, including greater access to back of house to load event provisions and for operational matters, as well as new stage lifts and retractable seating. Accessibility has been a key design feature for staff and customers, with the building now widely accessible to all.

- 4.4. New spaces in the building have been created, and all original areas have been completely refreshed. This has delivered a remarkable heritage building that is grand in stature but operates and functions as a modern building. New spaces that have been delivered as part of this project include, but are not limited to, a new bar capable of hosting guests before and after shows; a new digital lounge which will be able to stream film and broadcasts or host seminars; a new dance studio; and new artist areas for performers including private rooms and a green room for before and after performances. The design has unlocked and made use of the entire building enabling efficient delivery of multiple types of performance.
 - 4.5. With main works construction now complete, the project team has transitioned to focus on a complex fit out period to install all elements of furniture, equipment, and provisions to allow the building to be operated and the doors opened. This process will equip the building with the required provisions for digital functionality including multimedia, ICT, and all network provisions including brand new staff and public Wi-Fi. The building is also being fitted with state-of-the-art audio visual equipment including stage lighting and sound systems which make the building attractive to global artists.
 - 4.6. The fit out process also captures all catering, crockery, bar, and function equipment which will allow a new offer, not previously possible, to be made.
 - 4.7. OneRen have planned a number of test events that will be taking place in the coming months to ensure the building, its contents, functionality, and staff are ready for the first major event, the Royal National Mòd, in October 2023.
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5. Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub

- 5.1. Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub is a 21st century community hub and a modern home for library services at the heart of Paisley High Street, bringing new footfall into the town centre. The construction of this building which is taking place in a previously vacant and derelict building in the centre of the High Street, will become a modern educational resource for people of all ages to learn and be inspired.
- 5.2. Construction of the building is moving at pace and helps the council's ambition to improve the High Street with the new modern façade and glazing in place. Construction is approaching completion with finishing touches now being applied including paintwork and final fixings.
- 5.3. The main element to be completed is the bespoke children's play structure which will be a key attraction to integrate play and education. The project team has also commissioned renowned Paisley born artist, Claire Barclay, to complete bespoke artwork as part of this, which ensures a unique and effective finish to the building.
- 5.4. A vast amount of work is taking place to plan the fit out of the library which will see the building become a digital hub in the heart of Paisley. ICT kit is being prepared which will include PCs, laptops, carefully integrated audio visual equipment, as well as sensory equipment. This will be coupled with new Wi-Fi being installed to ensure public and staff have efficient network access.
- 5.5. A key feature of the library is of course books. The project team have designed appropriate library shelving and furniture to host the vast amount of books on offer and a contractor has been appointed for the manufacture and install of this equipment which will ensure the building retains one of its prominent purposes.

5.6. Construction work is due to complete in September 2023 with the fit out process then beginning to allow staff to move into the building ahead of the planned opening in late 2023. To achieve this, a short period of closure will be required at the current temporary library at the Lagoon Leisure Centre which will be coordinated and communicated in advance. This closure was recently approved at the June 2023 Leadership Board. Existing stock and provisions will be transferred to the new venue, and the planning for this has already begun with a tender process underway to appoint a specialist removal company.

6. Paisley Arts Centre

6.1. Paisley Arts Centre is being extended and upgraded into a unique and intimate performance venue and creative hub, driving new life and footfall into the heart of the town centre. This refurbishment project includes a complete replacement of the building's mechanical, electrical and plant equipment, a full refurbishment throughout, new retractable seating, accessibility improvements and a new extension to improve the number of covers in the bar. These improvements will be further supplemented by the creation of a new external public realm space to provide additional event capacity.

6.2. Work to date has been slow due to various issues with the nature of the historic building and the confined spaces to work in. The contractor has faced challenging working conditions with the building, which has been coupled with the economic impact on the construction industry, resulting in a requirement to re-plan the project timeline. This means that construction completion is now expected in late 2023. The pace of construction is now significantly improved with good progress made in areas including the new extension and mechanical and electrical elements.

6.3. Progress has been made to install a new tension wire grid which is a key element of what this project will deliver. This new grid is suspended at ceiling height to allow access to the audio-visual stage lighting and sound equipment by technicians without the need to lower the equipment due to the confined space in the building.

6.4. Work will continue to progress with the delivery of construction to allow the project team to begin considering the fit out process which will require the delivery of all furniture, catering, ICT, audio visual, and many other provisions.

7. Paisley Museum Reimagined

7.1. Paisley Museum Reimagined will deliver a world-class destination telling the inspirational stories of Paisley's people and pattern and showcasing its internationally significant collections. This project includes repairing and renovating all buildings on the museum campus delivering a 20% increase in the overall area. The construction also includes a new extension housing a visitor reception and café, the installation of new mechanical, electrical and plant systems, as well as the introduction of a public courtyard. Importantly, this work enables an increase in the interpretation of the collections and number of objects on display, with a strong focus on digital interpretation.

Construction Work

- 7.2. Despite pressures and delays to programme there has been positive progress on site with the major concrete pours completed in the West extension including level 1 and 3 walkways leading to the café space from the new lift. In addition, the Factory Hall 1 balcony area above the new entrance and Factory Hall 2 floor slabs have also been cast. This, in addition to the previous concrete works to the east extension, completes the fully accessible circular route through the building meeting a key objective of the approved design.
- 7.3. Significant progress has also been made on the completion of roof works on the main museum building. So far, roof works that are complete have resolved all water penetration issues in these areas.
- 7.4. The red glazing for the new entrance is due to be delivered to site and Kier are anticipating this will be erected by the end of August leading to the west extension building being wind and watertight.
- 7.5. A number of other key works are complete to the Observatory and Oakshaw properties which is allowing scaffolding to be stripped and works to move internal. Historic Environment Scotland Architects continue to liaise with our design team on site as required
- 7.6. Construction has been delayed for the Museum partly to do with the condition of the building being much worse than originally expected. The result of this is the construction is expected to complete around Easter 2024, with an opening date expected in late 2024.

Exhibition Fitout

- 7.7. Following the appointment of specialist exhibition fitout contractor, The Hub, in May 2022, 96% of display pre-production drawings are now complete. Prototypes indicating materials, junctions, robustness and quality have been produced, tested and signed-off. Production of standard flexible display elements has begun.

Digital Interactives

- 7.8. Work is progressing well with digital display interactive development with 80% of software contracts now awarded and in progress.

Collections and Conservation Work

- 7.9. Conservation of 850 objects has now been completed with the remainder of works due for completion by December 2023 ahead of the object installation.
- 7.10. OneRen has secured additional external funding of £103,000 from 12 Trusts and Societies has been secured towards this work. 16 conservation contracts have been awarded to companies across the UK.
- 7.11. New photography of all works is currently underway with approximately 800 objects photographed for use in displays, publications and media coverage.

Fundraising

- 7.12. In July, a sum of £200,000 was awarded by an organisation who supports world leading cultural venues. The specifics around the organisation must remain confidential for the time being until all paperwork has been agreed. It should however be noted that this is only the second time in their history this foundation has chosen to support a project in Scotland, showing the significance of what is being delivered by this project.

- 7.13. The above award takes the total amount raised from Trusts and Foundations to over £1,234,000. This includes support from prestigious funders such as: The Garfield Weston Foundation (£300k), The Hugh Fraser Foundation (£250k) and The Wolfson Foundation (£200k).
- 7.14. The original Fundraising Strategy, which was written prior to the pandemic, stated that £1.5m would be raised from Trust and Foundations. There is confidence that the remaining £266,000 will be secured ahead of Paisley Museum re-opening.
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8. Abbey Quarter

- 8.1. Abbey Quarter is a high quality public realm project to support the investment in the Town Hall facilities and provide an accessible outdoor events space for Paisley Town Centre. The project extends over the area in front of, and to the side of the Town Hall.
- 8.2. Design of the area in front of the Town Hall extending into the green area is at RIBA Stage 3 (ready for planning). Consideration has been given to the Paisley Abbey which is captured in this area of design to ensure it remains fully accessible. Previously, a public consultation was carried out for this element in November and December 2021 which obtained wide public support.
- 8.3. Historic records and recent trial excavations indicates that there could be a risk of finding human remains in carrying out the public realm works at the identified locations. To allow these works to proceed, the Council intends to submit a Disinterment Application to Paisley Sheriff Court. The granting of the application will allow the Council to proceed with the planned works and if any human remains are discovered, these will be treated with care and compassion in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Exhumations and reinterred, into Hawkhead Cemetery.
- 8.4. The relevant paperwork required for the court order has now been prepared and correspondence has taken place with the Minister of Paisley Abbey, who is in support of the proposed process and wishes to be the nominated Minister to conduct any reinterment if required. It is intended that the application will soon be submitted to the Sheriff Court, in August 2023.
- 8.5. Assuming approval is granted to proceed by Paisley Sheriff Court, the project will progress with a planning application and then onto the procurement process to appoint a contractor. It is expected that work will begin in spring 2024, and work will begin shortly with OneRen to plan for full access to the newly refurbished Paisley Town Hall during the works.
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9. Townscape Heritage and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme 2 (TH.CARS2)

- 9.1. Paisley TH.CARS2 is now complete apart from the outstanding work to upgrade the Liberal Club on Paisley High Street. This programme has delivered Building Repair projects, Shopfront improvements and a Small Grant programme to historic properties in Paisley Town Centre. The project is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Renfrewshire Council, with combined project funding of over £4.1 million, and additional contributions from owners. The project is also delivering public realm improvements and a successful programme of heritage related activities and events has now completed.
- 9.2. Grant support for external repairs has been awarded to ten larger building repair projects with nine projects completed. Works to the final project, 32 High St (Liberal Club), are

currently on site. However, completion has been delayed largely due to significant additional rot works discovered on site and the project is not expected to complete until November 2023.

- 9.3. The current TH.CARS2 scheme completion date is 30 September 2023. An extension until March 2024 has been discussed with the funders to allow completion of the Liberal Club and submission of final reports and evaluation and a formal request has been submitted.
 - 9.4. A significant difference has been made to the condition and appearance of a number of prominent properties in Paisley Town Centre including: 2/3 County Place opposite Paisley Gilmour St, now restored and converted to flats, 20 New St (Vienna's night club), 41 High St (Right Way Credit Union offices), Sma Shot Cottages, 9 Gilmour St (Walker Laird's offices), 28 High St, 18 Georges Gate, 10 Shuttle St and 5 George Place, (Paisley Trophy Centre) which was recently used as a set location for a BBC Agatha Christie production.
 - 9.5. Shopfront Improvements grants have supported ten projects in the High Street with nine shopfronts completed. These include: 30 High St (White Cart Company and Sinclair Jewellers), 36 High St, (Shelter), 61 High St (Print and Copy it), 41 High St (Right Way Credit Union), 44 High St (Uptown Barbers), 63A High Street (Nomads) and 18 High Street where two shopfronts have recently completed. Works will shortly complete at 67 High St (Houston's Kilts). The TH.CARS2 project has also supported a Small Grants programme mainly for traditional window repair projects in the Town Centre.
 - 9.6. Public realm works have also been funded through the project with works completed at George Place. Public Realm works to pavements in the High Street area opposite the Museums are now complete. This has been a complex project with private basements below the High Street pavements and additional structural repairs required. However, the works have made a significant difference to the quality of the public realm in this area and support the improvements to the Museum. Works to resurface Weighhouse Close where it meets the High Street have completed.
 - 9.7. TH.CARS2's community engagement programme of Heritage Education, Training and events has also now concluded. Comprising 42 projects, it has seen delivery of 630 workshops and over 115 separate events. Over 2,500 participants, trainees and volunteers have been engaged and estimated audiences of over 50,000 reached. More than 100 partners have been involved locally and nationally, and over 150 job opportunities have been created for consultants and freelancers.
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10. St James' Playing Fields & Ferguslie Sports Centre

- 10.1. These projects will work towards delivering Renfrewshire's vision to 'make sport a way of life'. In 2018, Council approved the upgrading of changing facilities at Ferguslie Sports Centre and for the demolition and replacement of the existing pavilion at St James Playing Fields. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, a decision was made to put these projects on hold until such time that it was appropriate to proceed.

Ferguslie Sports Centre

- 10.2. In July 2022, approval was given to resume the planning of the Ferguslie Sports Centre upgrades. This work will completely refurbish all existing changing facilities to the sports centre, bringing a greater experience to the already well utilised facility. The work will also ensure that the building is future proofed by fixing all issues with the roof to ensure no leaks, which has been an ongoing issue. The building will also receive upgraded

boilers as part of this process making it more efficient and of better quality to customers and staff.

- 10.3. Tenders to appoint a contractor for Ferguslie Sports Centre have recently been submitted and the project team will now work to complete the process to recommend a bidder, to be presented to the September 2023 Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board. This will then allow a contractor to mobilise and begin works in 2023, completing works in the first half of 2024.

St James' Playing Fields

- 10.4. An update was provided at the January 2023 Economy & Regeneration Policy Board to note that it was not viable to proceed with the single bid that was received to construct the new pavilions at St James' Playing Fields due to being significantly over budget.
- 10.5. A commitment was made to conduct value engineering on the design to bring this in line with budget and return to tender in May 2023. This was achieved and the project successfully went back out to the first stage of the tender process in May 2023. This process was completed, and the project has now proceeded to the final stage of tendering with bidders able to submit prior to September 2023.
- 10.6. Following the bidding process, a recommendation will be made to the November 2023 Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board to appoint a contractor. A period of mobilisation, manufacture and preparation work will then take place by the contractor with works due to commence on site in spring 2024 with construction completion expected in September 2024.
- 10.7. The project team recently met with the Paisley North Community Council to discuss the plans for this project which was well received and allowed a constructive discussion around what will be delivered, and how the views of the Community Council could be incorporated.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There are a number of significant risks associated with capital investment on the scale outlined in the report, many of which have been previously advised to members. Construction and refurbishment works in historic buildings are intrinsically subject to a higher degree of cost volatility due to the nature of the works and the fact that the complexity and detail of the works required are in many instances not fully known until the works are in progress and the building condition is fully understood. The existing capital budgets for those works in progress – Paisley Town Hall , Paisley Museum and Paisley Arts Centre – are under considerable pressure due to these issues and also due to the extended timescales of the works which were severely affected by the pandemic closedown and subsequent modified working practice period.
Council agreed in June 2023 to pause elements of the wider cultural venues and town centre infrastructure programme in order to release funding towards those projects whose budgets are under pressure; and as these projects conclude and final costs are clarified, further updates to Board will be provided. It should be noted however that even with the above Council decision there remains a significant degree of risk and potential cost which could place further pressure on total capital resource.
There has been ongoing discussion and updating of the business cases for each of the cultural venue with colleagues in OneRen, including critically the updating of base assumptions in terms of operating costs and potential income generation. While core assumptions and the

projected revenue operating position of Paisley Town Hall and the Arts Centre currently remain consistent with original projections, the updating of assumptions is indicating that there is likely to be revenue funding pressures associated with Paisley Museum which are above original business case assumptions. These predominantly relate to a revised catering offer and emerging clarity on potential income from touring exhibitions; as well as updated projections of utilities, maintenance and soft FM costs. The Council will continue to discuss with OneRen options to mitigate these additional costs, however it would also be prudent for the Council to build these updated cost projections into future revenue plans.

2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none

3. **Community/Council Planning** –

- *Our Renfrewshire is thriving* – These projects will link our communities and facilitate a significant increase in footfall to Paisley and surrounding areas. The infrastructure will enable Renfrewshire to host world class performances and attract new footfall from far beyond the local area.
- *Our Renfrewshire is well* - The outputs of these projects will enable safe and inspiring locations for all. From arts and performances to learning and educational space, Renfrewshire will offer anyone the ability to engage and take interest in either a new subject matter or an existing passion that is now much more accessible. Driving world class performances to the area and having 21st century work and education spaces will support people from Renfrewshire to engage in beneficial activities that will in turn support education and interest.
- *Reshaping our place, our economy and our future* – These infrastructure projects allow access to new and existing jobs for people in our communities. Significant increase in footfall will benefit local businesses who can grow as a result and in turn support their ongoing viability in the area. An increase in arts and performances will allow a platform for Paisley becoming a cultural hub in Scotland which can be used to drive new educational agendas with greater access to this subject matter.
- *Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all* – A specific focus has been applied to the redevelopment and construction of these projects to ensure accessibility is a key feature. A significant amount of thought has gone into making historic, and predominantly inaccessible buildings, available for anyone to enjoy and utilise. There are no barriers to utilising any of these buildings, and One Ren will continue to deliver an events programme that caters for everyone including those in more deprived areas.
- *Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy* – With these buildings being in the heart of Paisley Town centre, it means they are accessible sustainably due to the well-connected nature of the town centre. Limited town centre parking will force the use of public transport which will work towards the net zero ambitions of the Council. Recently completed infrastructure through AMIDS, including the shared cycle and walkway, also enhances the connectivity, and in future years with the opening of the Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside bridge, Paisley will become a vastly accessible route by sustainable travel.
- *Working together to improve outcomes* - Officers and contractors continue to work closely with local businesses and a business engagement programme will commence shortly to bring this to focus.

Throughout the development of these projects, several organisations were engaged to design the outputs including accessibility groups, the Scottish Government, Historic Environment Scotland, multiple private sector organisations and the local community.

4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** – note the improvements being delivered to current assets.
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council’s website.
8. **Health & Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – all contracts are tendered in accordance with Council procurement procedures and where relevant taken to FRCS Board for approval.
10. **Risk** – Project specific and Programme level risk registers have been established for all projects. These are kept under regular review and reported to the Council’s internal City Deal and Infrastructure Programme Board.
11. **Privacy Impact** - none
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – not applicable
- 13/ **Climate Risk** – these projects will significantly improve all mechanical, electrical and plant systems within existing and new buildings affected. This, coupled with improved efficiency in windows and doors will drive down the requirement for heating, in turn lowering the carbon footprint from key council buildings.

List of Background Papers

none

BW
July 2023

Author: *Barbara Walker, City Deal and Infrastructure Programme Director; Email Barbara.walker@renfrewshire.gov.uk*



To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Village Heritage Grant Scheme - Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Council Motion of 3 March 2022 to create a £0.250million conservation and heritage grants scheme for property owners in and around the centres of Renfrewshire's villages.
- 1.2 The repair and maintenance of privately owned historic properties, to an appropriate conservation standard, helps preserve the historic environment and maintain our villages as sustainable, thriving places.
- 1.3 Two complementary grant schemes are proposed, available across the eleven Renfrewshire villages which previously benefited from the Villages Investment Fund: "Grants for Heritage Maintenance Plans"; and "Grants for Heritage Repairs".
- 1.4 The application process for both schemes will follow a similar model to the online process successfully established for the Retail Improvement Scheme in Renfrewshire, with applications scored on a range of criteria which assess impact, quality and deliverability. It is anticipated that the scheme will go live in autumn 2023.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
 - (i) Approves the proposal for the creation of a Village Heritage Grant Scheme, utilising existing identified budgets, through two complementary schemes: Grants for Heritage Maintenance Plans; and Grants for Heritage Repairs;

- (ii) Authorises the Head of Economy and Development to refine the parameters of the grant scheme and produce the relevant guidance and application pack, to be available on the Council's website.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council meeting of 3 March 2022 agreed to commit £0.250million of capital resources committed to town centre regeneration and underpin a conservation and heritage grants scheme for property owners in and around Renfrewshire's village centres.
- 3.2 The Village Heritage Grant Scheme will focus on preserving and enhancing the historic built environment in Renfrewshire's villages, complementing the existing Villages Investment Fund to support projects which strengthen the character, identity and heritage of our village communities.
- 3.3 In aligning with the Villages Investment Fund, the intention is that the Village Heritage Grant Scheme will be available to property owners in Bishopston, Bridge of Weir, Brookfield, Crosslee, Elderslie, Houston, Howwood, Inchinnan, Kilbarchan, Langbank and Lochwinnoch.

4 Village Heritage Grant Scheme

- 4.1 In devising an application and assessment process, lessons have been learned from Renfrewshire Council's Retail Improvement Scheme and the Paisley TH.CARS2 regeneration project. Research has also been undertaken into similar schemes offered by councils and heritage trusts nationally.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that the Village Heritage Grant Scheme will be targeted primarily at private owner occupiers (including shared owners), but third sector organisations and commercial businesses (who are more likely to be lessees) would also be eligible to apply.
- 4.3 Properties dating from 1945 or earlier will be eligible for funding. Applications will be scored according to a range of criteria which will be weighted to prioritise listed buildings, buildings at risk and buildings within Conservation Areas.
- 4.4 The intention is to make grants available through two complementary schemes:
 - (i) Grants for Heritage Maintenance Plans will support a conservation accredited professional advisor to undertake an external survey and prepare an illustrated, costed maintenance plan for a privately owned historic property. Grants of up to 80% of eligible costs (excluding VAT) - up to a maximum value of £1,500 per property - are proposed.
 - (ii) Grants for Heritage Repairs will support the repair of a privately owned historic property. Small Grants of up to 60% of eligible costs (excluding VAT) are proposed and would be available for works valued between £3,000 and £8,000 (excluding VAT).

Standard Grants of up to 50% of eligible costs (excluding VAT) are also proposed; these would be available for works valued over £8,000 (excluding VAT). The maximum amount awarded for Standard Grants would typically be £25,000.

4.5 The proposed criteria for the Village Heritage Grant Scheme will support the assessment of impact, quality and deliverability of applications. It is anticipated that criteria will include:-

- Whether the property is listed, within a village Conservation Area or is identified on the Buildings at Risk Register;
- Ownership and evidence of commitment of owners to repair and maintain the property;
- Whether the property is currently occupied and has a long-term, sustainable function;
- Evidence of a level of input from a conservation accredited professional advisor;
- Whether quotes have been obtained from Renfrewshire based contractors and their experience in heritage works.

5 Next Steps

5.1 Subject to receiving approval from the Board, officers will refine the conditions and parameters of the Village Heritage Grant Scheme and produce the relevant guidance and application pack, which will be available on a dedicated page on the Council's website.

5.2 The scheme will also be supported through a marketing campaign which will promote the scheme via appropriate Council social channels. It is anticipated that the scheme could be open for applications by autumn 2023.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Funding for both schemes utilise an approved Council budget.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is thriving* – The schemes support development which will protect and enhance the built heritage of Renfrewshire's village centres, contributing to the creation of thriving places which support individuals, communities, and businesses.

- *Reshaping our place, our economy and our future* – The schemes will help support the restoration and productive re-use of buildings in the centres of Renfrewshire’s villages, improving the built environment, helping to create job opportunities and contribute to economic growth.
4. **Legal** – Third party grants will be awarded within the relevant Council policies and will be subject to the Council’s approved conditions.
 5. **Property/Assets** – None.
 6. **Information Technology** – ICT will help develop and maintain the online application process for both schemes.
 7. **Equality & Human Rights** – The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
 8. **Health & Safety** – None.
 9. **Procurement** – None.
 10. **Risks** – None.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – None.
 13. **Climate Risk** – With cognisance of Historic Environment Scotland’s ‘A Guide to Climate Change Impacts: On Scotland’s Historic Environment, Our Place in Time, 2019’, the repair and maintenance of Renfrewshire’s historic fabric will contribute to the restoration and repair of buildings and will improve the performance of these properties over time.

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To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Historic Graveyards - Tourism Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Economy and Regeneration Board of progress made in respect of the Council motion of 28 April 2022 to review Renfrewshire's historic graveyards and their future tourism potential.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- (i) Notes the work undertaken and progress to date.
 - (ii) Notes the intent to bring a further report to Board at a later date.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council meeting of 28 April 2022 approved a motion in relation to "Renfrewshire's Historic Graveyards". The motion states:-

That Council agrees that officers should undertake a review of the historic graveyards within Renfrewshire, identifying ownership and maintenance requirements and report back with recommendations to enhance the valuable contribution these can make for tourism and future generations."

- 3.2 Although history, heritage, and culture are key aspects of Renfrewshire's tourism proposition, historic graveyards have not specifically been promoted. This report provides an update on work undertaken by officers in response to the motion and sets out a range of next steps.

4. Ownership and Maintenance

- 4.1 Research to date indicates that there are currently 33 graveyards in Renfrewshire (Appendix 1), of which 9 remain active burial grounds (as of 2023).
- 4.2 The Council currently owns 23 churchyards and cemeteries and is responsible for their maintenance and upkeep. Maintenance works are practical in nature and include grass cutting and addressing unsafe structures as part of the councils memorial safety inspection programme. The Environment and Infrastructure Team will be carrying out a project on burial databases this year as the Council does not currently have information on grave ownership within churchyards.
- 4.3 Further investigation is currently underway in respect of identifying owners of the graveyards which are under private ownership and other stakeholders, to support understanding of access arrangements, maintenance regimes and opportunities for heritage tourism.

5. Tourism Potential – Initial Findings

- 5.1 Alongside the ongoing review of ownership, initial research has been undertaken by officers to consider the tourism potential of Renfrewshire's historic graveyards. This has included contact with stakeholders who have an interest or key role in relation to the promotion of local heritage, such as the Heritage Centre managed by OneRen and Renfrewshire Local History Forum.
- 5.2 The feedback received from initial discussions suggests that at present, interest in historic graveyards as part of Renfrewshire's tourism proposition is at a low level and would not currently form the main driver of visits to the area. In addition, graveyards of interest such as Castlehead Churchyard, the resting place of Robert Tannahill, are not owned by the Council and have limited access.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding, feedback also has indicated interest in historic graveyards and their promotion. OneRen's Heritage Centre receive regular enquiries with graveyards listed under Commonwealth War Graves Commission of particular interest, while Woodside Crematorium is promoted through an existing heritage trail www.paisleycemetery.co.uk/heritage-trail/. The Renfrewshire Local History Forum has also indicated that Kilbarchan Old Parish Churchyard (formally Kilbarchan West) may have potential to link with recently re-opened Weavers Cottage, operated by the National Trust for Scotland.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 While research to date has indicated that the promotion of historic graveyards is limited, the potential exists to consider and build on existing activity to support a wider tourism proposition for Renfrewshire. This could for example include the development of a "graveyard trail" which raises awareness of local heritage for both local residents and visitors to the area.

6.2 In this context officers will continue to build on existing datasets in relation to ownership and maintenance with a view to investigating the feasibility of creating a new graveyard/historic trail. It is anticipated this will involve:-

- Further detailed assessment of historic graveyard sites to assess their condition, accessibility and preservation needs. This may require to be undertaken by specialist consultants and officers will explore suitable funding sources in this context.
- Engaging with landowners in respect of access to privately owned graveyards, ongoing maintenance and opportunity for inclusion with a new heritage trail;
- Considering maintenance costs and resource requirements for key historic graveyards under Council ownership;
- Considering additional historic assets, such as memorials, monuments and sculptures which could be incorporated alongside historic graveyards into a new, broader, heritage trail;
- Considering potential funding routes to support further development of any new trail.
- Liaising with the Council's Marketing and Communications team to promote historic graveyards on the Paisley.is and Council website and any potential new trail.

6.3 The work undertaken by officers and the feasibility of a new heritage trail will be informed by ongoing consultation with key local heritage organisations as identified in paragraph 5.1 above.

6.4 Progress on the feasibility assessment will be reported to Board at a future date.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – unknown.

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.

3. **Community Planning** –

- **Reshaping our place, our economy and our future:** Renfrewshire Council is working with stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for regeneration and economic recovery/growth.
- **Building strong, safe and resilient communities:** working in partnership with local groups and organisations to achieve positive outcomes.

4. **Legal** – Unknown.

5. **Property/Assets** - None.

6. **Information Technology** – None.

7. **Equality and Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
8. **Health and Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risks** - None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – Recognising Tourism Outlook 2030.
13. **Climate Risk** - No identified impacts at present.

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Appendix 1 - Recorded graveyards in Renfrewshire

(Those marked * remain active)

Bishopton Houston Road Cemetery *

Bridge of Weir, Nittinghill Cemetery

Elderslie

Abbey Cemetery *

Broomward Cemetery *

Erskine Parish Churchyard

Houston & Crosslee Cemetery *

Inchinnan

All Hallows Graveyard

Inchinnan Cemetery *

Inchinnan Old Parish Church

Johnstone

Johnstone Cemetery

Johnstone Churchyard

Johnstone High Parish Church of Scotland Churchyard

Kilbarchan

Kilbarchan Cemetery *

Kilbarchan East Church

Kilbarchan West Kirkyard

Lochwinnoch

Castle Semple Collegiate Churchyard

Lochwinnoch Cemetery *

Saint Winnock's Churchyard

Paisley

Abbey Close Burial Ground

Arkleston Cemetery *

Burntshields Associate Congregation Church Cemetery

Castlehead Churchyard

Gaelic Chapel Graveyard

Gaelic Church Burial Ground

Hawkhead Cemetery *

Oakshaw Trinity Churchyard

Oakshaw United Presbyterian Church Burial Ground

Paisley Abbey

Paisley Laigh Kirk

Paisley Witches Burial Site

St. Mirin's Cathedral

Woodside Cemetery and Crematorium

Renfrew

Mount Zion Church Graveyard

Renfrew Parish Churchyard



To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following on from the “Analysis of Renfrewshire’s Business Growth Sectors” report to Board in November 2022, this report highlights the recommendations from the second stage report produced by Business Pointer for the Council. This report also states the proposed actions officers will take to try and capitalise on the area’s economic and business development opportunities.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- (i) notes the content of the content of this report and associated appendix.
 - (ii) notes the actions proposed in respect of recommendations suggested in the Growth Sector Study.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 At the start of 2022, the Council identified a need to engage specialist advice as to which sectors Renfrewshire should be targeting to support business growth and secure inward investment. EKOS were commissioned to carry out this work in April 2022 and the results of this commission were reported to this board on 1 November 2022. That report highlighted that there are several opportunities which Renfrewshire needs to capitalise on to support the growth of its economy further. These include having a stronger ‘local focus’ on current strengths in sectors such as manufacturing, engineering and life sciences. Specifically, it highlighted the need for the Council to play a more significant role in identifying new development opportunities and having stronger relationships with key players within these sectors. There is also a need for an injection of new skills to address potential new economic opportunities.

- 3.2 Business Pointer were appointed in 2022, to highlight potential key actions which could be taken by the Council to deliver on the recommendations of the EKOS report and the ambitious economic aspirations outlined in the Council's Economic Strategy (2019). Specifically, Business Pointer aimed to reconcile existing priorities, team capacity and skills engaged in the economic development and regeneration functions of the Chief Executive's Service, with the future opportunities and challenges identified by EKOS and the Economic Strategy.

4 Situation Analysis

- 4.1 Business Pointer's report highlights what is currently working well within the Council and what could be done better in respect of sectoral business growth and development.
- 4.2 Services within the Council which are working well include Business Gateway and the advice it offers to small and medium sized businesses. The Council's Retail Improvement Scheme and InCube Creative Programme were also highlighted as positive services the Council provides. At a wider level, progress at the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMIDS), the delivery of the Council's City Deal Programme and investment in Paisley Town Centre were seen as positives in respect of driving Renfrewshire's economic activity.
- 4.3 The report also investigated the relationships, policies and procedures of Council services that could be working better in respect of delivering the Economic Strategy. Key areas of improvement highlighted include enhanced partnership working, better communication with the wider business community, the requirement to grow and increase visibility of Renfrewshire's inward investment proposition and the need to achieve supply chain growth.
- 4.4 Overall, the report highlights the need for the Council to take a stronger leadership and communication role, enhancing its employment and business services as well as aligning resources to better deliver sector growth and the Economic Strategy's ambitions and targets.

5 Sectors, Interventions and the Way Forward

- 5.1 Having identified the key areas for improvement, the report highlights the sectors and activities which the Council can have a proactive influence in to address these issues:
- *Tourism* - With the new Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan currently in development, which will set out key priorities and enhancements post COVID, there is an opportunity to recalibrate the sector locally. There is a need for greater industry engagement, marketing and strategic development.
 - *Creative and Cultural Industries* - The creative industries sector is growing at regional, national, and UK-wide levels, therefore there is a strong case for the Council to facilitate further growth in this sector.

Specifically, the Council needs to continue with its support of the performing and creative arts and increase its involvement in supporting commercial manufacturing-related design and computer consultancy/digital services.

- *Green and Sustainable* - There is a need for more businesses within Renfrewshire to adopt green practices to meet local and national emission targets. The Council needs to continue its ongoing green economy work, engaging directly with local businesses on how they can become more sustainable.
- *Business Gateway* - Whilst the Business Gateway service of the Council is currently operating well, the report highlights some additional areas for improvement including the sharing of databases within the Council supporting the marketing of services, events and other initiatives.
- *Inward Investment* - There is a requirement for Renfrewshire to be a more visible inward investment location and for the Council to create, sustain and manage stronger relationships with organisations who influence inward investment such as Scottish Development International (SDI), NMIS, universities etc. The report also mentions the need for a more developed marketing and product portfolio with collateral created to support the handling of investment enquiries. Additional land supply also needs to be identified and developed to accommodate inward investment requirements that materialise.
- *Relationship Management (Working with Key Influencers, Stakeholders and Businesses)* - The report identifies gaps between the Council and major influencers and stakeholders at one level, and with business operators working across Renfrewshire at another. Business Pointer recommend that the Council should be introducing a client account management philosophy so that nominated officers are aware of what is happening at key economic and investment locations across Renfrewshire e.g. Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway, AMIDS, Braehead etc.

5.2 In conclusion, the report highlights that Council staff should be given specific responsibilities to be more proactive, allowing more meaningful and effective engagement with key stakeholders and businesses across Renfrewshire. There is also a need to present a more coherent inward investment proposition to drive future economic growth and development in the area.

6 Recommendations

6.1 In final section of the report Business Pointer provides conclusions and recommendations to enhance the Council's economic and business growth services.

Officers have now reviewed these and propose the following actions:

1. Adopting a relationship management or account management philosophy

Officers note the requirement to understand local business needs better. Senior managers will now be responsible for fostering relationships with key businesses in the area and will share key information among Council teams to support these businesses further where possible.

2. Appoint a new Tourism Account Manager

Funding has been secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund to create a new post titled *Business Development Officer – Tourism*. Initially the post will run to March 2025 and the postholder key duties will include developing strong, long-term relationships with tourism businesses and operators, providing business advice and guidance where required. They will also be responsible for attracting and converting new tourism related enquiries, creating local job growth and boosting the economic output of the sector.

3. Action Plan for the delivery of green and sustainable interventions

There are a range of existing programmes in place within the Council which are aimed at encouraging businesses to adopt green and sustainable interventions which will contribute to reducing carbon emissions. These include the Net Zero Grant which offers local businesses in Renfrewshire funding to allow them to make changes to their business premises and operations to reduce their carbon footprint. Officers will continue to look for ways to extend this programme of support further.

4. Inward investment

Officers will develop an inward investment webpage on the Council's website. This will be a single page which signposts where development opportunities / available sites exist within Renfrewshire. It will be created with in conjunction with key stakeholders such as the owners of Hillington and Westway and the webpage will provide links to their respective pages. The page will also highlight any future development opportunities at AMIDS and a single point of reference will be provided who will respond to any investment enquiries.

5. Economic Leadership Panel

Officers are currently reviewing the future role of the panel and whether it should continue in its current format.

6. Reaching the business community

Officers will investigate running a series of economic conferences which will foster debate and discussion and will provide local businesses to come together and network. Each conference will have a different theme, enabling a wide range of businesses to be targeted.

7. Supply chain development

Economic Development and Procurement teams in the Council have been developing and delivering a wide range of new supports to Renfrewshire businesses to encourage them to bid for public sector contracts and get on the Council's supply chain. This builds on existing work with the Supplier Development Programme and Business Gateway support. The main driver of this is work around the Community Wealth Building agenda and the aim of increasing and sustaining local economic growth and also increasing Council, and other public sector spend, in the local area.

The development of economic conferences will also provide networking opportunities which ultimately could lead to future supply chains being formed amongst SMEs.

8. Business Gateway

Funding has been secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund to create a Challenge Fund to bring added value and additional support to Renfrewshire's indigenous businesses enabling programmes of support to address their specific needs.

9. Business analytics

Scotland has more than 120 public organisations in receipt of funding from Scottish Government (SG) who then direct those funds to aid the growth of Scotland's business base. The Business Support Partnership is working on a shared approach to data and analytics, (for example Companies House, non-domestic rates, Dunn and Bradstreet Business Database, SIMD, etc) to create a Master Customer Record (MCR), which will give a more insightful view of the companies we all work with. This should provide a reliable source of information which will allow officers to report accurately on KPIs etc.

7 Next steps

- 7.1 Officers will seek to progress the actions outlined above and will update the Board where appropriate.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No additional finance is sought. All funding is accounted for within existing Council budgets.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.

3. **Community/Council Planning –**

- **Jobs and the Economy** – Implementation of the recommendations of the report could support more investment and jobs within the local economy.

4. **Legal** – None.

5. **Property/Assets** – None.

6. **Information Technology** – None.

7. **Equality & Human Rights**

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

8. **Health & Safety** – None.

9. **Procurement** – None.

10. **Risk** – None.

11. **Privacy Impact** - None.

12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.

13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

None.

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Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report

April 2023

Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report, April 2023

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Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report, April 2023

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Council's 2020–2030 Economic Strategy outlined the challenges and the interventions necessary to successfully deliver to the Renfrewshire economy, and while the COVID pandemic intervened, it is considered by the senior management team that now is the right the time to look and determine what actions are needed to deliver the 2030 targets.

This report is the second part of the Council's approach to defining what actions should be taken to capitalise on the area's economic and business development opportunities and how to deliver them:

- EKOS undertook a Growth Sector Study in 2022 to analyse growth sectors and identify sectoral strengths and weaknesses;
- This commission addresses the organisational implications for the relevant officer teams to successfully deliver to the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions.

Our task is to identify what the Council needs to do internally to progress implementation of the Economic Strategy and the Growth Sector Study and how it needs to align with partners and stakeholders externally who have, and could have a greater, impact on the economy.

Our brief has been to reconcile existing priorities, team capacity and skills engaged in the Economy and Regeneration functions of the Chief Executive's Service, with future opportunities and challenges identified by EKOS and to build on the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions. This means that we've been asked to comment on and make recommendations on a future account management structure and focus and how this should or could integrate with existing functions.

2. Background

EKOS' report identified growth sectors and potential components of what should be included in the business and inward investment strategy for the Council. Our interpretation of Ekos' analysis is that these are some of the implications for the Council to deliver to the opportunities identified:

- There is a need for the internal staff team to address existing priorities and still be able to address new opportunities identified, which has resource implications
- There is a need for an injection of new skills to be able to address these opportunities
- There are fundamental gaps in the external communications between the business development team within the Council and elements of the business community as well as with key stakeholders.

3. Situation Analysis

The report looks in detail at what is working well and what could work better, as seen in EKOS' and our own analysis and by stakeholders and partners.

Among the services that are working well are: Business Gateway and advice for small and medium sized businesses; Employability; AMIDS, MMIC, NMIS, the Retail Improvement Scheme, Paisley Town Centre investments and Paisley regeneration, connections with the Glasgow City Region and several more.

We explore in more detail the policies, procedures, relationships and focus of services that aren't working so well, since we need to address and enhance these areas to build both the Council's capacity for intervention and partners' roles in delivering to a shared Economic Strategy and agenda.

- Arguably, the **Economic Leadership Panel** could be used to better effect and could be more proactive, especially in supporting engagement and communications with businesses.
- **Regular Business Collaboration and Communication with Stakeholders** – partnerships with key influencers and stakeholders could be enhanced and accelerated considerably. There are limited formal and informal channels of communication making it harder to, amongst others, align stakeholders' priorities with the Economic Strategy; define collaborative opportunities; understand what is happening in R&D, innovation, local and inward investment, skills needs, etc.
- **Engagement and Communication with the Wider Business Community**¹ is weak in contrast to the Council's role in Business Gateway and employability services. The issue is important because there is limited knowledge of who owners and managers are, their sectors, whether they are doing well or need help. Equally, businesses don't know what the Council can offer and will themselves be passive about communicating with the Council. So, even where funds and advice are on offer, take up will be reduced and the costs of marketing higher.
- **Marketing** – the Invest in Renfrewshire web site serves a useful function, but economic development and inward investment dimensions are immature and require development and investment in search to be a first stop for business information and access to services.
- **Inward Investment** – despite AMIDS, Renfrewshire is almost invisible as an inward investment location. The Council doesn't know what businesses in the area might have development or expansion plans and is not active enough in taking the lead with Scottish Development International in placing Renfrewshire on their agenda for inward investment². A key issue will be the preparation of new sites for inward investment³
- **The Green and Sustainable Agenda** – the Council has to influence businesses to be sustainable – and contribute to net zero targets. The Council's influencing and advocacy skills needs to be stepped up to impact businesses. Pivotal to this need is understanding who the businesses and the decision makers within them are, understanding their sectors etc.

¹ And larger companies

² The Council team have been working on an enhanced Inward Investment product portfolio proposition for some time, and this piece of work requires to be concluded to allow influencing and direct responses to inward investment enquiries

³ Which the current Strategic Property Review being conducted by the Council might address

- **Supply Chain Management** – the Economic Strategy highlights supply chain growth, to support businesses. The absence of information and engagement with local businesses makes it hard to intervene and support them to identify suppliers locally. NMIS and MMIC can fulfil this role for their own client group, but we don't know what other opportunities might exist without first undertaking the wider research to map local supply chains, learning from "Meet the Buyer" workshop successes and actively collaborate with NMIS and MMIC.

4. Way Forward and Recommendations

Sectors and activities where the Council can have influence are in:

- **Tourism** – with an action plan due to be produced spring 2023, the agenda will be set for what enhancements should happen. Post Covid, there is an opportunity to recalibrate the sector as well as capitalise on the Paisley town centre investments. The paucity of industry communication suggests a strong person and job specification is needed for a tourism account manager. to manage engagement and joint action with the tourism trade. The account manager will provide the glue required to develop and re- position Renfrewshire Tourism, collaborating with internal and external influencers to deliver the Action Plan⁴.
- **Creative and Cultural Industries** –the performing and creative arts are known and supported, but commercial manufacturing-related design and computer consultancy/ digital services are not. Skills Development Scotland forecasts Renfrewshire growth for these sectors and the Council should market Renfrewshire as a location for them and strengthen engagement and joint action with the design sector. This will help re- position them in Renfrewshire, including prioritising the sector for employability and Business Gateway support⁵.
- **Green and Sustainable** – the role must be energised to contribute to the Council's and Renfrewshire Climate Panel's plans and targets for net zero. This would be through influencing the business sector to adopt green and sustainable practices – targeting responsive companies and broader communication to the full business base, offering a set of tools that will help analyse and define actions to reduce emissions^{6 7}.
- **Business Gateway** – while Business Gateway, business and employability services are working well, some improvements could be made.
- **Inward Investment** - inward investment enquiries demand cross Council involvement and responses from elected members, directors and senior managers involved with land and buildings, financial support or incentives, education and skills etc. A clear-cut structure is required to identify lead officer(s)– and how and when others across the Council need to be involved. There is also an absolute need to create, sustain and manage stronger, closer relationships between the Council and e.g. SDI, NMIS, MMIC and the universities, who influence inward investment, also knowing which local companies might have development

⁴ The draft Tourism Account Manager Person Specification is at Appendix 5

⁵ The Council is also actively involved in the Creative and Cultural Industries Action Plan for the Glasgow City region, with specific actions for the Council identified in this

⁶ Working with the new Head of Climate, Public Protection and Roads at the Council, as required

⁷ The Council has a prominent role in the Glasgow City Region approach to sustainability

plans, together with the identification and preparation of sites to accommodate new investment.

- **Relationship Management: Working with Key Influencers, Stakeholders and Businesses** - the fundamental gap between the Council's economic and business teams with major influencers and stakeholders at one level and with business operators working across Renfrewshire at another should be addressed by introducing a client account management philosophy and approach so that nominated officers know what is happening at e.g. Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway Park, AMIDS, Braehead etc. and who the companies are. Equally, nominated senior officers need to be given the account management responsibility to work with key stakeholders – specifically NMIS, MMIC, UWS, , SDI etc. This means adapting the roles of officers to take on this role and a senior manager taking on a co-ordinating role within the Council.

5. Recommendations

Our conclusions and recommendations are that Renfrewshire Council should seek to amplify their economic and business growth services and impact by implementing a number of changes – which we detail below:

1. To adopt a **relationship management or account management** philosophy and approach within the service to enable closer working with stakeholders, influencers, partners and rank and file businesses across the economy, at the **direction of a lead, senior manager** – who might be an existing or new appointment. Alongside this change in working practices, a **coaching and training plan** is required to help staff achieve what will be expected of them through this proactive account management approach
2. A **Tourism Account Manager should be appointed** with the responsibility to work with stakeholders in the tourism sector and encourage collaboration, product development and joint marketing
3. A sector specific **action plan for the creative and cultural sector**⁸ would complement that currently being prepared for tourism
4. Develop an **Action Plan for the delivery of green and sustainable interventions** and actions to encourage businesses to adopt green and sustainable targets that contribute to delivering net zero emissions
5. Develop a planning and reporting structure that will allow for Renfrewshire to position itself for **inward investment** and be able to respond to enquiries and opportunities – this would include the development of an inward investment profile (including marketing collateral) and product portfolio (cataloguing sites, skills and other needs of inward investors) and preparing new sites, working with intermediaries and influencers (through the recommended account management system) and identify the team of people who need to be involved (including touch points from Leader and Chief Executive to key staff)
6. Potentially the role of the **Economic Leadership Panel** should be expanded to help gather intelligence and be part of the advocacy of the area for new and inward investment. This might necessitate strengthening the membership to include key partners not on the Panel at the moment

⁸ Especially focusing on the commercial sector

7. Prepare a **communications plan** for communicating with the business community; this might include an **annual Economic Conference**, facilitated for debate and discussion with the business community to support communication
8. Undertake the research to **map local supply chains** and identify opportunities for local businesses
9. Evaluate the benefits or otherwise of keeping the **Business Gateway service inhouse or contracting out** and review **Business Gateway processes** to see whether time and resource can be released
10. Research, plan and adjust research methodologies to generate a **broader range of metrics based on economic, social and environmental factors** to report accurately on KPIs that meet the Economic Strategy targets. Equally, plan for and develop a **database of businesses** across the area (identifying their owners, managers, employment, functions etc.) in order to support market research, support account managers and generate effective communications with them.

Business Pointer, April 2023

Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report, February 2023

1. Introduction

The Renfrewshire economy comprises some 4,720 businesses (2021) with 83,750 people in employment (down from a peak of 87,000 in 2018)⁹ and a total estimated population in mid-2021 of 179,940¹⁰. The Council's 2020–2030 Economic Strategy outlined the challenges and the interventions necessary to successfully deliver benefits to the Renfrewshire economy. The Strategy was a response to the inherent opportunities in the Renfrewshire economy and community and while the COVID pandemic intervened, the time is now pertinent to look see what actions are needed to deliver the 2030 targets. These are related to jobs, the size of the economy, the working-age population, economic inactivity, skills and growth of Renfrewshire's manufacturing sector.

This report is the second part of Renfrewshire Council's approach to defining what actions should be taken to capitalise on the area's economic and business development opportunities and how to deliver them:

- EKOS was appointed to undertake a Growth Sector Study in 2022 to analyse growth sectors and support Renfrewshire Council to identify current sectoral strengths and weaknesses and recommendations on which key sectors should be targeted for future investment;
- Business Pointer's current commission from the Council is to address the outcomes and implications of EKOS' work for the organisation of Council officer teams and recommend where changes in focus and responsibilities are considered necessary to successfully achieve the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions.

This report aims to achieve the second part of the approach – to identify what the Council needs to do internally to progress implementation of the approved Economic Strategy and Growth Sector Study and how it needs to align with partners and stakeholders externally who have, and could have a greater, impact on the economy.

2. Brief, Objectives and Methodology

Our brief has been to reconcile existing priorities and team skills engaged in the Economy and Regeneration functions of the Chief Executive's Department, with future opportunities and challenges identified by EKOS and to build on the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions. So, we aim to support the Council to identify how current activities and priorities can be managed while new tasks are taken on and what the resource implications are.

This means that we've been asked to comment on and make recommendations on a future staff structure and focus and how this should integrate with e.g. business development, supply chain management, inward investment, sectoral priorities and partnership with external and internal influencers and stakeholders.

In detail our objectives for this assessment have been:

- To absorb the Council's and the EKOS strategic framework and growths sector opportunities

⁹ EKOS Analysis of Renfrewshire Growth Sectors, 2022 (report for Renfrewshire Council)

¹⁰ National Records of Scotland

- Review with business leaders, including the Economic Leadership Panel, their views about opportunities and integration with the Council
- Assess national agencies (i.e. Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International, Skills Development Scotland) perspectives on opportunities in Renfrewshire and delivery implications
- Internal interviews with key staff in Economic and Business Development to support a review of current structures and priorities.

For the Renfrewshire economy, the objectives of our commission are:

- To reposition and enhance the Council’s role in sectoral and business growth and development
- Align existing resources/ partners to deliver to sector growth ambitions (as defined by the 2020-30 Economic Strategy and tempered by EKOS’s evaluation and our analysis)
- Stimulate and manage collaboration/ enhanced and regular communication with strategic partners
- Advise on the development of an inward investment profile/ product portfolio and identify the customer journey/ process, the team of people who need to be involved (including touch points from CEO/Elected Members and collateral required)
- Identify how to further stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship
- Identify what land and property assets need to be further developed to support innovation, enterprise, incubation and inward investment

3. Background

Development and intervention in Renfrewshire’s economy has to be set against national, regional and local policies and priorities. This can be a complex picture, which EKOS has already articulated and summarised (see Appendix 3), but crucially – and potentially impacting Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy – there are four emerging cross cutting themes with implications for the Council’s organisation and management of economic and business development (the extent to which they achieve this is explored further below):

- **Delivering inclusive economic growth, wellbeing and fair work** – the narrow, historic, growth focus and over-estimation of the reality of ‘trickle-down’ economic theory, have contributed to the creation of a deeply unbalanced economy in Scotland¹¹. Inclusive growth combines increased prosperity with greater equality, creates opportunities for all of Scotland’s people and places, and distributes the benefits of increased prosperity fairly – initiatives include fair work, enterprise and skills reform, early years expansion, initiatives to narrow the attainment gap and promote fair access to higher education, and Fair Start Scotland. Local supply chain development can play an important role in maximising the local benefits of inward investment to ensure quality, sustainable and diverse employment opportunities for all of Renfrewshire’s people and places.
- **Addressing the climate emergency and securing a ‘just transition’** – Scottish Government’s net zero emissions target by 2045 is echoed by the Council’s target to make Renfrewshire carbon neutral by 2030. The Transition Commission¹² and the Climate Emergency Response Group¹³ highlight how to deliver a fairer, greener, and more resilient Scotland. Crucially for Renfrewshire, this means a strong and compelling green dimension to business development and support.
- **Innovation and digital** – innovation is a key to long term economic performance and inclusive growth, for which manufacturing is a significant feature¹⁴. Some sectors are already adapting and there is close

¹¹ [Scotland’s National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#)

¹² [Advice on a Green Recovery](#) (2020)

¹³ [Scotland’s Green Recovery](#) and [Update to the Climate Change Plan](#)

¹⁴ [Scotland’s Innovation Action Plan](#) and [A Changing Nation: How Scotland will Thrive in a Digital World](#)

alignment too with the SDI's identified opportunities in its Inward Investment Plan: energy transition, decarbonisation of transport; software and IT; digital financial services; digital business services; space; healthtech; transformation of chemical industries; food and drink innovation. The Glasgow City Region Economic Strategy notes that the region contributes to all these areas.

- **Place-making, sustainability and community wealth building** – while the principles associated with place making have already been adopted by Renfrewshire Council, there is still a need to interpret how places operate and where capacity, assets and opportunities lie (i.e. in sectors in (say) industrial locations) in order that good decision-making and best use of assets and resources help ensure the right focus for investment and the best contribution to community wealth making.

Renfrewshire's 2020-2030 Economic Strategy sets out the ambitions and actions to achieve sustained, inclusive growth of the Renfrewshire economy. Its development has been led by the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel, bringing together leaders from across the private and public sector, enterprise agencies and education and skills experts.

“Renfrewshire is the base for some of the UK’s biggest engineering, technology and logistics companies and home to the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS). International exports from Renfrewshire were valued at £2.1 billion in 2017, 6.4% of all Scotland’s exports and the second highest in the City Region. The Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce processed over 12,000 export documents in 2018, the third highest in Scotland. Renfrewshire manufacturing generates more than £1 billion of those exports with food and drink (£370 million), chemical and pharmaceutical (£313 million) and metal/machinery fabrication (£298 million) our largest exporting sectors. Exports to EU and non-EU nations are evenly split. The food and drink sector is the largest exporter to non-EU countries; chemical and pharmaceutical exports the largest to EU destinations.”

The Economic Strategy was complemented by the post-COVID Economic Framework agreed by the Council¹⁵. Its 10 near term strategic priorities were:

- Creation of a Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel
- Accelerating development of the Glasgow Airport Investment Area (now known as AMIDS)
- Meeting housing needs and aspirations
- Regenerating and investing in Paisley Town Centre
- Developing and investing in our cultural and heritage assets
- Promotion of Renfrewshire
- Tackling disadvantage, targeting deprivation and supporting people
- Skills escalation and development
- Strengthening transport infrastructure
- Outward looking - connecting with the Glasgow City Region

EKOS' report identifies growth sectors and potential components of what should be included in the business and inward investment strategy for the Council. They are explicit about some of the implications for the Council to deliver to the opportunities identified:

- There is a need for the internal staff team to address existing priorities and still be able to address any new opportunities identified
- There is a need for an injection of new skills to be able to address these opportunities

¹⁵ Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan, approved by Council 17th December 2020 - [Microsoft Word - Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan Council 17 12 20 \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://www.cmis.uk.com)

- There are fundamental gaps in the external communications between the business development team within the Council and elements of the business community (e.g. businesses located in Inchinnan and Westway Industrial Estates or operating within specific sectors) as well as with key stakeholders.

4. Situation Analysis

4.1 What's Working Well?

Before focusing on what needs to be done to reposition and enhance the Council and its partners' roles in sector and business growth and development, it is worthwhile to look at what is working well and where advances have been made since 2020.

The Economic Strategy and post Covid Economic Recovery Plan, together with the four cross cutting themes summarised above, set the tone of what is required to be delivered in economic and business development. The following table details what is working well, as seen by stakeholders and partners. While some weaknesses or inherent difficulties of the following might be evidenced, in the context of the Sectoral Growth Study they demonstrate progress being made.

Renfrewshire Economic Activity – What's Working Well
Business Gateway and advice for small businesses in Renfrewshire ¹⁶
Employability, fair work practises and the Living Wage
Retail Improvement Scheme
InCube Creative Programme
Spend Local Campaign
Paisley First Business Improvement District
Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce membership services
Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS)
Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC)
National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS)
University led education and R & D
Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel
Paisley Town Centre investments and Paisley Regeneration
Connecting with the Glasgow City Region
City Deal
Market Renfrewshire and its strengths as a place to live, learn and work
Delivery of the cultural infrastructure programme and the events programme

4.2 What Could Work Better

We explore in more detail the policies, procedures, relationships and focus of services that aren't working so well, since the way forward is designed to address and enhance these areas to build both the Council's capacity for intervention and partners' roles in delivering to a shared Economic Strategy and agenda.

- Arguably, the **Economic Leadership Panel** is not being used to the best effect. Its skills and contribution help determine strategy in reaction to the Council definition of needs, priorities and action. The full capability of the Panel will be realised when it is able to take more of an initiative on the agenda and produce solutions rather than, as now, being responsive. This isn't a dramatic issue and the Panel will we anticipate mature as it gains confidence post Covid together with serving a pivotal role in engagement and communications with

¹⁶ But see note further below

businesses in Renfrewshire. Perhaps, the Panel might be well served with its own dedicated (small) staff resource, to help facilitate this broadening of its agenda¹⁷.

- **Regular Business Collaboration and Communication with Stakeholders** – such partnership between Council officials and key influencers and stakeholders in Renfrewshire (extending beyond the Economic Leadership Panel) is inadequate. By this we mean that limited formal and informal channels of communication exist between appropriate senior Economic and Business Development officials and (say) AMIDS, MMIC, NMIS and the Universities. This makes it harder to:
 - Get the right access point within the Council to explore opportunities and be heard
 - Ensure alignment of stakeholders’ priorities with the Economic Strategy and for the Economic Strategy to learn from and adapt to successes amongst stakeholders
 - Define collaborative opportunities
 - Understand what is happening in R&D, innovation, local and inward investment, skills needs and developments and what employment opportunities might be for Renfrewshire
 - Drive change and recognition in/out of the Council
- **Engagement and Communication with the Wider Business Community** – parallel to the above – and in contrast to the Council’s role in Business Gateway and Employability services – is the lack of focus and commitment of the Council’s engagement and communication with the wider business community. The Chamber of Commerce and Paisley BID both communicate with individuals within the Council and their members and serve a significant role as an intermediary in communications with their members, but their membership numbers don’t encompass the whole Renfrewshire business community. The issue is an important one because:
 - Council officials generally do not know what businesses are on the patch – beyond clients of Business Gateway and Employability services, meaning that they do not know the owners and senior managers, cannot identify sectors that operators are in and don’t know what investment/ growth/ new product development is happening inside these businesses
 - Because of these characteristics, the Council will be unable to support supply chain management, attracting data for use in marketing for Inward Investment and many other benchmarks which would support and enhance the reputation of Renfrewshire as a good area to do business in
 - On a geographical basis – at Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway Park, Glasgow Airport Investment Area, Braehead – businesses and their owners and managers are not known, nor are trends, nor potential demand for industrial and office space
 - An up-to-date and good database of businesses, their owners and managers doesn’t exist making communication and marketing to them impractical and reducing the ability for evidence-based decision making
 - Generally, the Council’s lack of dedicated pro-active resource in this area means that businesses don’t know what the Council can offer and will themselves be passive about communicating with the Council. So, even where funds and advice are on offer, the take up will be significantly reduced and the costs of marketing higher
- **Marketing** – while the Invest in Renfrewshire web site serves a number of useful functions, the economic development and inward investment dimensions are immature and require significant development and investment in search to serve the function of a first stop for business information and services.
- **Inward Investment** – despite AMIDS, Renfrewshire is nearly invisible as an inward investment location. There are several dimensions to this:
 - The Council doesn’t know what businesses in the area might have development or expansion plans (for the reasons articulated in 3 above) and is not the first stop for owners/ managers to explain their proposals and seek support to argue for or help with their developments (skills, funds, space)

¹⁷ This might be something that is worked towards, with commercial sponsorship, or e.g. the Chamber providing this support
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- The Council is perhaps not active enough in taking the lead with Scottish Development International in placing Renfrewshire on their agenda – either to understand inward investment needs, influence infrastructure, site or space to accommodate or help define what other parameters influence inward investment decisions (telecoms, schools, housing, skills availability etc.)
- The Council team has been working on an enhanced Inward Investment product portfolio proposition for some time, and this piece of work requires to be concluded to allow influencing and direct responses to inward investment enquiries. This portfolio needs to be marketed and managed by a nominated individual – with requests for information and enquiries being managed effectively from a strong knowledge base
- The Council’s Strategic Property Review should consider whether and what new sites might be required to accommodate inward investment
- And as articulated in 2 above, partnership with key influencers needs to improve significantly to influence inward invest generated via the Universities, AMIDS, MMIC and NMIS
- **The Green and Sustainable Agenda** – while the Council has committed and invested in a dedicated Sustainability Manager, the activity required now is to influence businesses to be sustainable – and contribute to Scottish Government and Renfrewshire Council’s targets – is at early days, we can learn already that the Council’s influencing and advocacy skills need to be stepped up to have any effect with businesses. Pivotal to this need is understanding who the businesses and the decision makers within them are, understanding the sector they work in and individual business needs. This means that mechanisms for communicating with them be developed (all as described in 3 and 4 above).

“There are two key points to consider here, the first is that the Council needs to reflect on how they can best support businesses to become more sustainable as we aspire to become carbon neutral (net zero) by 2045. Secondly, in doing so how can the Council exploit the economic opportunities related to the net zero agenda to support and create new green businesses and jobs that are accessible for local people. For example, the manufacture, installation, and maintenance of heat pumps will be a key growth area for businesses working in the plumbing, heating, and air conditioning subsector (construction and manufacturing) as we transition away from traditional fossil fuel heating systems.”

“Renfrewshire already has a strong cluster and a large business base working in these sectors, and there is also the research expertise being developed at NMIS, where energy transition is a key theme within the research agenda. This may be an area the Council can exploit in collaboration with industry and Further/Higher Education providers to develop a business support and skills pathway.”¹⁸

We recommend that a Green/ Sustainable Action Plan is developed to allow managers, influencers and the officers involved in business development and regeneration are included to maximise the outputs from effective communication.

- **Supply Chain Management** – the Economic Strategy highlights the ambition to achieve supply chain growth, to help foster an entrepreneurial culture and support the creation of new and growing businesses. Local supply chain development can play an important role in maximising the local benefits of inward investment to ensure quality, sustainable and diverse employment opportunities for all of Renfrewshire’s people and places. The absence of information and engagement with local businesses suggests an inability for the public sector to intervene and support them identify suppliers locally. NMIS can fulfil this role for its own client

¹⁸ EKOS report, ibid

group, but we don't know what other opportunities might exist without first undertaking the wider research to map local supply chains, learning from "Meet the Buyer" workshop successes and actively collaborate with NMIS and MMIC.

4.3 Conclusions from What's Working Well and What Could Work Better

Many elements of the economic and business portfolio are working well. but as we highlight, there are several areas where opportunities might be better capitalised upon:

- The Council take a stronger leadership/ communication role across the portfolio of influencers and stakeholders, to help identify collaborative opportunities, as well as enhance the Council's status
- Renfrewshire Council can position itself as an exemplary, proactive Council delivering best advice and support to businesses in the area
- Support further positive engagement and communication by the Council to support business development and growth
- Enhance the Council's role in economic, employment and business services by strengthening the offer of an efficient one and first stop for business growth
- Better align resources and partners to deliver to sector growth and Economic Strategy ambitions and targets
- Ultimately, support local businesses to access available support

5. Sectors, Interventions and the Way Forward

We detail here the actions needed to address the shortcomings identified above. It's important to say that while the actions catalogued below are a menu, from which the Council can select and prioritise (depending on resources, finance and organisational solutions), they also provide a coherent range of interventions and structural solutions designed to address and deliver more effectively to the Economic Strategy targets.

5.1 Renfrewshire's Key Growth Sectors

EKOS identified and categorised three groupings of business/ sectors and our role now is to select those that the Council and its stakeholders and partners can reasonably influence:

- So while "foundation sectors" of health and social care, construction, hospitality and retail were identified, internal discussions about the Councils' role highlights that only tourism and hospitality can be influenced with the finite resources of the Council
- Growth sectors as defined by Scottish Government comprise financial, creative, energy, life sciences and advanced manufacturing. While AMIDS and in particular NMIS are addressing the manufacturing sector and MMIC the life sciences (and the Council could work more closely with them), the Council should be focusing in on the creative sector as a strong opportunity
- Local niche, specialist and growth sectors in Renfrewshire were suggested as logistics (and distribution) and property asset management, sectors it would be difficult to find a locus for the Council

However EKOS are explicit about the opportunity to work on a place-basis, thus potentially working across sectors with those located at e.g. Inchinnan, Westway, Braehead, the Airport and Hillington. Further analysis and discussion also focused on the green and sustainable sector in addition to the Tourism and Hospitality and creative industries.

5.2 Tourism

In 2021 there were an estimated 3,800 people employed in the sector, in 415 business units¹⁹, with tourism worth £123.7m in the area in 2018²⁰. A parallel piece of work is currently being undertaken by the Council to develop a Tourism Action Plan to replace the last visitor and tourism plan that ran from 2018 to 2021. The research and consultation outcomes from this work feed into this sectoral review.

Post COVID, there is an opportunity to think again about how to recalibrate tourism in Renfrewshire. The very positive experience of hosting successful events and delivering an energetic cultural programme together with the capital investments in Paisley Town centre, in the cultural infrastructure, including the Museum and Art Gallery and at the Town Hall, offer new opportunities for heightening profile and footfall²¹. The proactive management of tourism marketing from within the Council is however counterbalanced by Renfrewshire being in the “shadow” of Glasgow, despite the collaborative nature of marketing and the City Deal, and there is a disconnect between the area and vibrant Glasgow Airport. Equally and most tellingly, the tourism industry’s engagement with the Council or in the strategic development of the sector is limited, potentially restricting collaborative product development, positioning and marketing of enhanced proposition(s) for the area. There are however 2m people living within ½ hour of the area and 3.5m within 1½ hours.

Interventions and Recommendations:

- Confusion and some overlap occur in the respective roles of the Council’s Economic Development, Marketing and OneRen functions, which need resolved
- The paucity of industry communication suggests a strong person and job specification is needed for a business advisor with a background and experience in tourism whose role would be to account manage engagement and joint action with the tourism trade, to help them become more resilient, grow and help enhance the visitor experience. The account manager will provide the glue required to develop and re-position Renfrewshire Tourism, collaborating with internal and external influencers to deliver the Action Plan²².
- The forthcoming Tourism Action Plan will detail other interventions.

5.3 Creative and Cultural Industries

EKOS estimated that there were some 1,900 people employed in the broad creative and cultural sector in Renfrewshire in 2021, with 395 business units. The creative industries have a broad definition, comprising media, performing arts, design, information and communication-related and computer consultancy – so everything from the performing arts to manufacturing related design. Within these statistics, we can see the average employment is just under 5 people.

“There has been substantial growth in the number of people employed in information and communication-related jobs, increasing 100% or by 1250 people between 2016 and 2020. The majority of this growth has been driven by computer consultancy-related employment, which has seen a 17% growth in registered businesses, and 150% growth in the number of people employed. In contrast, the wider Glasgow City Region and Scotland experienced a decrease in the number of registered computer consultancy businesses (-13% and -17% respectively) and much smaller increases in the numbers of people employed in this area (34% and 37%), suggesting that Renfrewshire has particular strengths in this area.”

Skills Development Scotland forecasts that the creative industries will be a growth area for the Renfrewshire economy between 2021 and 2031, with an estimated 11% growth in the number of people employed in the area by 2031. Given the apparent strength of computer consultancy in Renfrewshire, it seems likely that some of this future

¹⁹ Source EKOS

²⁰ VisitScotland estimate

²¹ Although this may need a closer integration of tourism and cultural activities to develop a stronger proposition for the area

²² The draft Tourism Account Manager Person Specification is at Appendix 5

growth will be driven in this area. There may also be potential to capitalise on the strong film and TV sector in the City of Glasgow and develop the Renfrewshire-based production industry.

Given the increasing strength of the creative industries at the regional, national, and UK-wide levels, it follows that Renfrewshire should seek to facilitate further growth in this already expanding sector to support a green recovery post-pandemic and deliver low-carbon jobs into the future.

Interventions and recommendations are as follows:

- Given the groundwork undertaken for the City of Culture bid²³, and the Lottery supported Great Place Scheme²⁴ which pulled together the associated Renfrewshire Heritage Network, it would be appropriate to redefine what the cultural and heritage sectors need in terms of support and intervention. They probably need their own actions plans
- There is no outbound marketing of Renfrewshire as a location for the (commercial) design and creative sector and this should be remedied, to capitalise upon the perceived strengths of the sector. This could also potentially have a knock-on effect on recruitment for the University of the West of Scotland's creative and design related courses
- Since the sector is made up of SMEs and micro businesses, they should be eligible for employability and Business Gateway support – the intervention here is to ensure that the sector is prioritised, with, potentially marketing of such services targeted to them and evaluation of e.g. their incubation and business development and skills needs
- Our proposal is to amend the role of an existing member of staff to focus more on engagement with local creative and cultural businesses
- The comments made below about understanding who is in the sector and having up to date data about the businesses, applies to this sector

5.4 Green and Sustainable

We have highlighted the potential for intervention with businesses to adopt green and sustainable practices as being important in meeting Scottish Government and Council emission targets. EKOS also highlighted the economic opportunities related to supporting and creating new green businesses and jobs, through for example, the manufacture, installation and maintenance of heat pumps.

The Council's Plan for Net Zero sets out how the area will work towards net zero by 2030²⁵, which along with the Renfrewshire Climate Panel, surveyed local businesses to identify how to make immediate and future change possible in the business sector. The actions are well articulated around 5 key themes and actions:

- Clean energy
- Sustainable transport
- Circular economy
- Connected communities
- Resilient place

Independent research was commissioned into the area's current emissions which showed transport was responsible for 34% and both commercial and residential energy usage contributed 29% each - meaning these three areas are responsible for 92% of Renfrewshire total emissions. The research also outlined that the Council itself contributes

²³ Including the report of the Creative Renfrewshire Steering Group

²⁴ Which ended in September 2022

²⁵ [Renfrewshire's Plan for Net Zero - Renfrewshire Website](#)

only 2.5% of all emissions in Renfrewshire, reaffirming that the primary focus should be a leadership approach as climate change cannot be tackled with solely internal transformation.

This reinforces the Economic and Business case to influence the business sector to adopt green and sustainable practices, to help reduce emissions. While this is the philosophy underpinning the appointment of the Green Economy Officer, our perception and that of our consultees, is that the level of activity and communication to the business community, alongside relevant events, has to be stepped up. As EKOS suggest:

“The key learnings will be around how to specifically advise, encourage and engage businesses in the region to work towards Net Zero and understand the impacts of Climate Change. Information from the pilot businesses engaged should help identify local examples, best practice and any barriers/ challenges that can be applicable to other businesses.”

The interventions in this area are therefore:

- The role of the Green Economy function of Economic and Business Development needs to be stepped up to firstly identify and prioritise businesses that are ready and willing to be influenced on their green agenda (“pilot businesses” as identified above) and secondly, broaden the communication to the full business base, to offer a set of tools that will help analyse and define actions to reduce emissions These should be essential elements in an action plan for delivering green and sustainable change in the business sector
- Develop these tools and business advice that can be rolled out and offered to businesses in Renfrewshire
- Commission Green Tourism to offer specific advice to tourism and hospitality businesses on how they can measure their carbon footprint and taken ameliorative action to decarbonise and reduce their carbon footprint and become net zero. Green Tourism have a set of tools and webinars which could be rolled out to help this sector (again, part of the action plan)
- Commission research to drill down into those businesses in the area that are working in e.g. construction and manufacturing, which can transition away from traditional fossil fuel heating systems. This might best be done with NMIS, where energy transition is a key theme within the research agenda
- EKOS also recommended collaboration with industry and Further and Higher Education providers to develop a business support and skills pathway for the green sector
- The comments made below about understanding who is in the sector and having up to date data about the businesses, applies to this sector
- There is potential for an account management structure for engagement with external players in the green and sustainable sector – this would include (re)defining key objectives and outputs for the Council from this role and the internal reporting structure

5.5 Business Gateway

We highlighted that broadly Business Gateway, business and employability services are working well²⁶. We just have a few comments to make about what could be improved, having resources implications and potentially efficiencies, which could help with delivery of some of the other changes to interventions in the economy.

- Along with other employability services, databases aren't shared inside the Council, suggesting that marketing of services, events and other initiatives (e.g. workshops, sustainability initiatives) or gathering of economic and business data through research will be harder to achieve²⁷
- Additional administration resources could be beneficial to the client service team
- Investment in new research resources for the team, i.e. financial performance subscriptions, would provide current and relevant financial intelligence on client businesses and individuals at the click of a button i.e. credit scores. This small investment could bring new criteria for measuring grant/ funding applications

5.6 Inward Investment

We highlighted that Renfrewshire isn't visible as an inward investment location and the Council's relationships with inward investment influencers and intermediaries (SDI, NMIS, Universities, some companies etc.) aren't robust enough to either advocate or position Renfrewshire for inward investment. The Renfrewshire Economic Strategy highlights:

"Challenge 4 - To raise Renfrewshire's profile nationally and internationally as a natural location for inward and established business investment, for attracting talent and as a place to visit.

"The flagship investments bringing NMIS and MMIC to the developing, internationally focused AMIDS, are a strong confirmation of Renfrewshire's credentials for further inward investors."

"Challenge 8 - To make available land for business expansion, new business formation and inward investment."

We consider there to be five issues here in terms of the Council's structure and capacity to support and attract inward investment:

- Inward investment enquiries will demand cross Council involvement and responses from Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, through to senior managers/ directors involved with land and buildings, financial support or incentives, education and skills etc. A clear-cut structure is required that identifies lead officer(s) – see below – and how and when others across the Council need to be involved
- The Economic Leadership Panel might play a more proactive role in advocating the investment opportunities for the area – thus broadening its relationships with key players elsewhere in the local economy and amongst stakeholders
- Secondly, since SDI and other influencers and intermediaries will generate enquiries - and these will come from some local businesses too, looking to invest locally – there is an absolute need to create, sustain and manage positive relationships between the Council and e.g. SDI, AMIDS, Universities and local companies. The solution would be for a dedicated officer or team managing all inward investment enquiries and the relationship with these key influencers. Where others in the Council need to be mobilised to help respond to enquiries (e.g. property, employability, regeneration), then corporate protocols may be needed to establish clear lines of communication about who is doing what in response to enquiries. We highlight the relationship management issue in more detail below

²⁶ See also Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development, Indicators Framework Report 2020-21

²⁷ We acknowledge GDPR issues exist with sharing of database information across the Council; asking business operators about their willingness to share (non-sensitive) information may support subsequent marketing and communications to them

- Marketing and product portfolio – there is also a need for concrete marketing collateral to support the handling of enquiries and this may vary, or be required to be finessed to respond to either the source of enquiries i.e. from SDI, City Deal or through AMIDS or a University, or the type of enquiry (e.g. from a local company, manufacturer etc.) This activity needs to be resourced, well planned, coordinated and considered from every angle i.e. sectoral knowledge, case studies, available research, ambassadors for the area available to present/ talk about local business opportunities effectively to potential investors – in effect, a whole programme ready to go when an enquiry is received
- More sites need to be identified and developed to accommodate inward investment enquiries, officers suggesting that the shortage of sites is a constraint

5.7 Relationship Management - Working with Key Influencers, Stakeholders and Businesses

We've addressed the absence of structured relationships between Council Economic and Business units with major influencers and stakeholders at one level and with business operators working across Renfrewshire at another, and why this is important²⁸.

This fundamental gap in the Council's economic and business portfolio means that new investment, inward investment, supply chain, economic and business research and understanding of trends and collaborative working are all reduced.

The outcomes are the erosion of the Council's role to influence or be seen as a major player in the economy and the reduced ability to deliver to the ambitions and targets of the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy.

We consider that there are a number of implications and interventions for addressing this shortcoming, which have been broadly agreed with senior officers:

- Appropriate officers need to be given the responsibility to know the business operators at key locations - Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway Park, Glasgow Airport Investment Area, Braehead. This responsibility includes meeting and knowing key owners and managers within the businesses and, where necessary (e.g. where risks or investment opportunities arise) introduce senior staff or even the Leader of the Council to the operators
- Appropriate senior officers need to be given the account management responsibility to work with key stakeholders – specifically NMIS, MMIC, UWS -and businesses, to influence them in terms of their priorities, assess their achievements and alignment with the Economic Strategy and identify whether and how the Council may support them further etc. We don't underestimate the philosophical and procedural changes required within the team to deliver on account management, but the requirement is great
- The generic characteristics of account management are found at Appendix 4, for the roles identified above, along with generic KPIs
- One senior Manager needs to take on the role within the Council to coordinate and lead these account management activities (above) and external communications. This would allow sharing of intelligence, identification of growth opportunities, everyone to contribute to the inward investment proposition for the Council area and maximise the Council's and these stakeholders' knowledge and economic impact. This person will require key industry and influencing skills and will be a diplomat. They need to have credibility to operate across these agencies and sectors. Note also that delivery across these stakeholders and businesses needs many others in the Council and business development team to be directed and operate an account management role as an integral part of their duties

²⁸ We also suggested that delivery of Business Gateway and Employability services do engage and communicate with their client groups

- A separate Tourism Account Manager is proposed²⁹ (as detailed above and at Appendix 5), with indicative KPIs
- An up-to-date and good database of businesses and their owners and managers has to be developed and kept up to date to support officers to do their account management job and to allow regular research into the businesses, their employment, growth or changes and to support evidence-based decision making and to ensure targeted communication and marketing to them
- Inclusive Economic Growth necessitates a broader range of metrics based on economic, social and environmental factors. This is an area that needs to be addressed and will demand a readjustment to research methodologies to be able to report accurately on KPIs that meet the Economic Strategy targets
- Regular and consistent communications are required to be developed and delivered for businesses and stakeholders across the area, partly to demonstrate the Council's role, its "finger on the pulse" of the local economy and to regularly promote initiatives, workshops etc. being delivered by the Council and its partners. An online newsletter or similar would be appropriate
- We have written generic account management tasks (Appendix 4) to emphasise the adaptation of the responsibilities of existing job holders.

²⁹ This could be a two-year external contract, but requiring internal reporting to the senior manager

Indicative key stakeholders and partners are listed below:

Indicative Key Stakeholders and Partners	
Scottish Development International	Scottish Enterprise
Glasgow City region and City Deal	Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
Scotland Food & Drink	National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS)
Glasgow Airport	Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC)
University of the West of Scotland	Paisley First Business Improvement District
West College Scotland	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
OneRen	

Indicative tourism related stakeholders and partners (for the Tourism Account Manager	
Tourism	Glasgow Life
VisitScotland /EventScotland	Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions
Scottish Tourism Alliance	OneRen
Scottish Hospitality Group	Skills Development Scotland
Green Tourism	Universities
Historic Environment Scotland	

6. Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Plan

A lot of economic and business services are working well, but some structural barriers reduce the capacity to maximise beneficial impact on the local economy and promote the role of the Council.

Crucially, staff need to be given specific responsibilities to be proactive, rather than largely as now, being reactive. The absence of intelligence about who the businesses are, who leads and manages them, who to talk to etc. is indicative of limited resource and a reactive approach to business development. It also means that new opportunities aren't being identified; Renfrewshire isn't presenting a coherent inward investment proposition and consequently the Council itself needs to reassert itself to bring leadership and authority to sector and company growth.

Internal requirements from adopting this proactive approach comprise changes in the roles of several staff; clear reporting lines; clear, defined management objectives; regular appraisal on performance etc. all within Economy and Regeneration. Closer working relationships are also needed to share e.g. the relationships with external influencers and agencies held by other units of the Chief Executive's Department. Without underestimating the complexity of this change management within Economy and Development, the results will be the transition from a passive role to bring reassurance to key stakeholders and an enhancement not only of the Council's role but of the beneficial impacts on the business community.

6.1 Recommendations

Our conclusions and recommendations are that Renfrewshire Council should seek to amplify their economic and business growth services and impact by implementing a number of changes – which we detail below:

1. To adopt a **relationship management or account management** philosophy and approach within the service to enable closer working with stakeholders, influencers, partners and rank and file businesses across the economy, at the **direction of a lead, senior manager** – who might be an existing or new appointment. Alongside this change in working practices, a **coaching and training plan** is required to help staff achieve what will be expected of them through this proactive account management approach
2. Specifically for tourism, a **Tourism Account Manager should be appointed** with the responsibility to work with stakeholders in the sector and encourage collaboration, product development and joint marketing. A sector specific **action plans for the creative and cultural sector**³⁰ would complement that currently being prepared for tourism
3. Develop an **Action Plan for the delivery of green and sustainable interventions** and actions to encourage businesses to adopt green and sustainable targets that contribute to delivering net zero emissions
4. Develop a planning and reporting structure that will allow for Renfrewshire to position itself for **inward investment** and be able to respond to enquiries and opportunities – this would include the development of an inward investment profile (including marketing collateral) and product portfolio (cataloguing sites, skills and other needs of inward investors) , working with intermediaries and influencers (through the recommended account management system) and identify the team of people who need to be involved (including touch points from Leader and Chief Executive to key staff) together with the identification and preparation of sites to accommodate new investment
5. Potentially the role of the **Economic Leadership Panel** should be expanded to help gather intelligence and be part of the advocacy of the area for new and inward investment. This might necessitate strengthening the membership to include key partners not on the Panel at the moment
6. Prepare a **communications plan** for communicating with the business community; this might include an **annual Economic Conference**, facilitated for debate and discussion with the business community to support communication
7. Undertake the research to **map local supply chains** and identify opportunities for local businesses
8. Evaluate the benefits or otherwise of keeping the **Business Gateway service inhouse or contracting out** and review **Business Gateway processes** to see whether time and resource can be released
9. Research, plan and adjust research methodologies to generate a **broader range of metrics based on economic, social and environmental factors** to report accurately on KPIs that meet the Economic Strategy targets. Equally, plan for and develop a **database of businesses** across the area (identifying their owners, managers, employment, functions etc.) in order to support market research, support account managers and generate effective communications with them

6.2 Outcomes

The outcomes from implementation of the recommendations in this report are, in our view, clear cut:

- Reposition and enhance the Council role in sectoral and business growth and development
- Align existing resources and partners to deliver to sector growth ambitions, as defined by the 2020-30 Economic Strategy
- Stimulate and manage collaboration and enhanced and regular communication with strategic partners and the business community

³⁰ Especially focusing on the commercial sector

- Identify how to further stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship
- Identify what the inward investment portfolio, including property assets, needs to be to enhance Renfrewshire’s positioning and attract new investment
- Map and develop local supply chains and align with Renfrewshire’s businesses

6.3 Way Forward - Implementation

Some key decisions are required around resources, accountabilities, job descriptions and performance management:

1. Agreement of the overall report and its recommendations
2. Determine that there is budget for 1 new account manager for Tourism
3. One senior manager takes on the role of managing the account management responsibilities of staff whose job descriptions are expanded to fulfil this role
4. Agreement and commitment to introduce an account management approach and philosophy into the staff team, with allocation of responsibilities, reporting lines and accountabilities
5. Identification of needs and delivery to a coaching and training plan to upskill staff to fulfil these roles
6. Preparation and delivery of a communication plan to deliver to the ambitions of the report
7. Agreement of a clear direction for the green/ sustainability and creative industries tasks
8. Agreement and delivery of the preparation of a database of companies and changed research methodology to develop metrics associated with the economy, social factors and the environment

6.4 Risk Analysis

The fundamental question is what happens if Renfrewshire Council doesn’t adopt the recommendations from EKOS and Business Pointer’s work?

We suggested above that the actions that emerge from the analysis are a menu of sorts, from which the Council can select and prioritise, depending on resources and organisational solutions. However they also provide a coherent range of interventions and structural solutions designed to address and deliver more effectively to the Economic Strategy targets.

Failure to implement the recommendations will in our view result:

- In the Council’s role continuing as is and the Council not being seen, or actually being a major influencer in business development and inward investment
- Tourism, creative industries and the green agenda will considerably under perform
- Relationships with key influencers and intermediaries will remain “neutral”, suggesting that the Council will find it harder to influence their priorities and ensure their alignment with the Economic Strategy targets
- Local investment and performance by Renfrewshire businesses will occur either without the Council knowing, or being able to help
- Communications with the business community and understanding who they are will be weakened, suggesting also that marketing initiatives and support to them in the future will be harder.

Business Pointer, April 2023

Appendix 1

Interviewees

Name	Organisation	Position
Alasdair Morrison	Renfrewshire Council	Head of Economy & Development
George Hunter	Renfrewshire Council	Chief Economic & Regeneration Officer
Ruth Cooper	Renfrewshire Council	Economic Development Manager
Barbara Walker	Renfrewshire Council	Programme Director City Deal and Infrastructure
Colette Saez	Renfrewshire Council	Assistant Economic Development Manager Business Development
Andrew McKean	Renfrewshire Council	Tourism Officer
Robert Kinniburgh	Renfrewshire Council	Business Growth Advisor
Cindy Robb	Renfrewshire Council	Creative Industries
Marie Milne	Renfrewshire Council	Business Gateway Administrator
Joanna Quinn	Renfrewshire Council	Marketing Manager
Dr Victoria Hollows	One Ren	Chief Executive
Sylvia Smith	One Ren	Business Development
Michael Dunn	EKOS	Consultant
Chris Kelly	EKOS	Director
John Kelly	EKOS	Consultant
Michael Colhoun	Discover Scotland Tours	MD
Bob Grant	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	CEO
Jill Carrino	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	Deputy CEO
Ross Nimmo	Glasgow Airport	Head of Planning and Development
Fiona Gallagher	Mar Hall	Head of Sales
Helen Livingston	Branding Boutique	Director
Paul Fraser	Ingliston Country Club	Owner
Linda Barrett	Paisley Abbey	Manager
Paul Kilby	Glasgow City Region - City Deal	Regional Partnership Manager
Andrew Robertson	Glasgow City Region - City Deal	Intelligence Hub Manager
Scott McLean	Green Business/Zero Waste Scotland	MD
Gordon Smith	VisitScotland	Regional Director Regional Leadership & Development
Janie Neumann	VisitScotland	Sustainability Manager
Paul McCafferty	Scottish Enterprise	Tourism
Aileen Lamb	Scottish Enterprise	Programme & Strategy Manager
Anna Young	Glasgow Life	Senior Tourism Manager
Grant Edmundson	Frasers Property – Hillington Park	Commercial Director
Jonny Mone	UWS	Head of Business Innovation
Sandro Carnicelli	UWS	Senior Lecturer & Head of Events & Tourism Unit

Appendix 2

EKOS Priority Growth Opportunities for Renfrewshire

The key growth sector opportunities are aligned to the following thematic areas:

- Current sectoral strengths that require a stronger “local” focus:
 - (Advanced) manufacturing, engineering, life science/medical.
- Current “untapped” sectors where Renfrewshire Council and partners could do more to unlock the growth opportunity:
 - Development of local culture/ creative offering.
 - Further development of tourism/ hospitality offering.
- Innovation and entrepreneurship:
 - Cross sector - R&D intensive and with scale-up potential, with HE/FE leading.
- Land, property, and incubation:
 - Development of the land and property assets with a focus on innovation and enterprise and the role of incubators.
- Map and develop local supply chains:
 - Develop new support products.

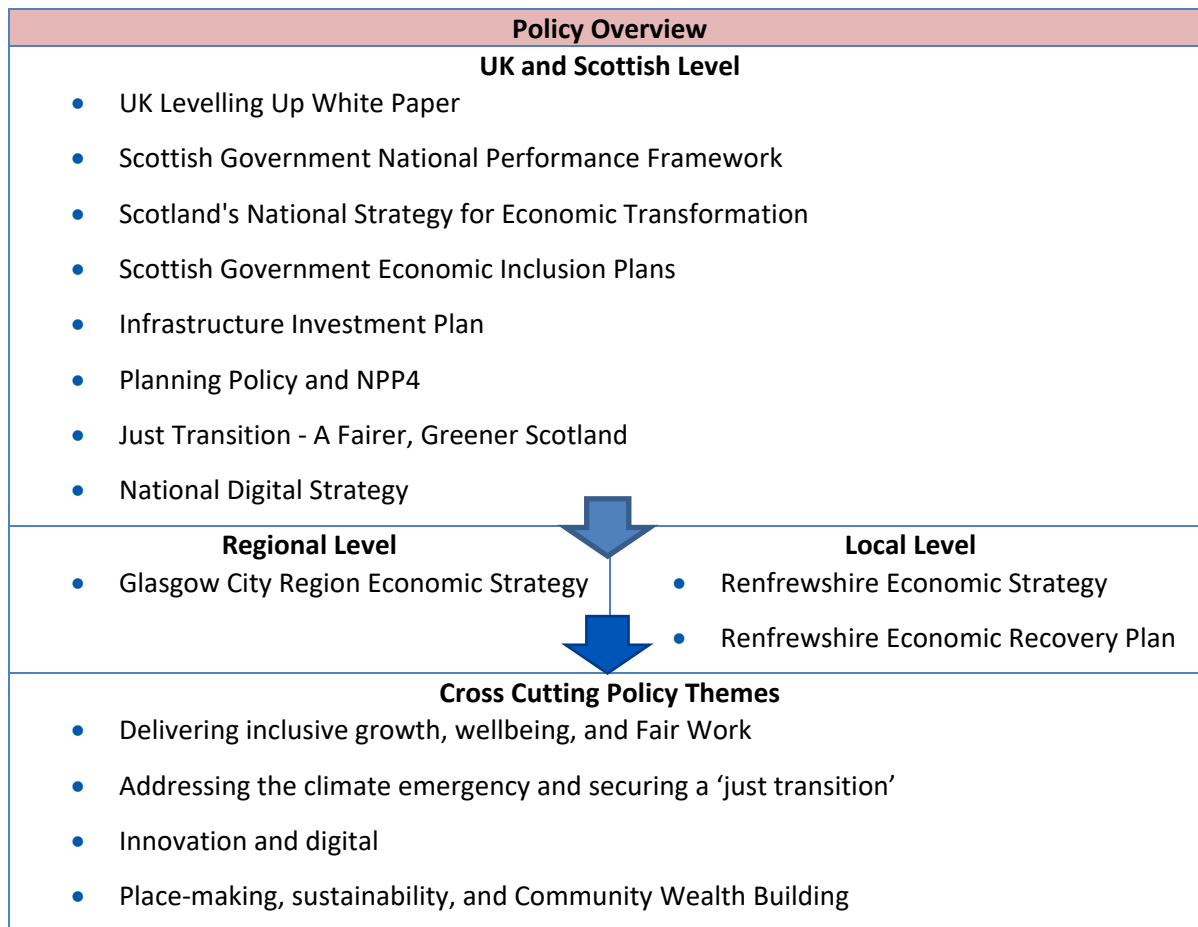
Inward investment

While more consideration of the level of resources which would be required, the following are highlighted as potential services:

- provision of a one-stop shop for anyone seeking to invest in Renfrewshire (start-up/growth/inward investor):
 - project scale requires to be defined with supporting triage service
 - named contact to act as front face of project and which will manage marketing
 - marketing and promotion
 - develop networks with public and private sector intermediaries

Appendix 3

EKOS Summary of the Policy Context



Appendix 4

Generic Account Management Roles and Responsibilities for Business Development Staff

Introduction

This is a generic account management statement of roles and responsibilities for business Development staff within Renfrewshire Council. The aim is to introduce an account management philosophy and approach to enhance understanding of and communication with stakeholders, influencers, partners and individual businesses.

Account Management

Account management is a structured approach to managing and nurturing relationships with players in the Renfrewshire economy, including major businesses, stakeholders and influencers³¹.

Within Renfrewshire Council, the role is to identify key business players, stakeholders and influencers and develop strong relationships with them – to agree on joint priorities, collaborative opportunities and ways of working – to support the achievement of the Councils' Economic Strategy objectives and targets. Within the Council, a senior manager will have responsibility for coordinating the efforts of staff and ensuring that a regular reporting mechanism is implemented to allow teams to know what is going on and where opportunities might be supported by Council intervention.

The account management's role will be to feed information back to departments, senior staff and members while mobilising and managing Council support to achieve the joint objectives and planned outputs with individual businesses, partners and stakeholders.

Account managers must learn about and be knowledgeable about the key businesses, stakeholders and influencers and what drives them. They must be customer focused to build trust and be strong communicators to manage their external relationships properly. They must also communicate with and manage others internally who contribute to account management objectives.

Account Manager Overview

- Operate as the lead point of contact within the Council for allocated stakeholders or businesses
- Operate as the lead point of contact for businesses that may operate from an allocated business location or industrial estate (e.g. Inchinnan)
- Get to know and create strong, long-term, trusting relationships with these organisations and their senior managers and board members
- Address the business issues and opportunities each business or stakeholders has and identify whether and how the Council and its partners might be able to support them
- Keep senior management advised and informed of contacts, opportunities, risks etc. within the portfolio of account managed companies or influencers
- Liaise with other cross-functional internal Council teams to ensure business and stakeholder needs or queries are met
- Experienced facilitator who can engage and lead complex groups

Skills

³¹ In the commercial sector the role is a dual one - helping customers in their relationship with the account manager's business, while also maximising the value of sales and services to them and making sure to retain them as customers

Individuals operating an account management system with the Council will be educated to degree standard and/ or have industry or public sector experience at an operational level – advising and supporting businesses.

They must be familiar or able to adapt and use account management software (CRM), be able to communicate with business clients and be able to manage diverse people and teams internally, to generate their commitment to contribute to the external needs of businesses.

They will be able to plan ahead, coordinating internal inputs and ensuring systematic reporting to measure the effectiveness of the Council's support/ intervention and contribution to Economic Strategy objectives and targets.

They will also have the proven ability to juggle multiple account management projects at a time, while maintaining sharp attention to detail

They will be a self-starter and have the capability to initiate new business opportunities for the Renfrewshire economy and persuade internal and external clients of their contribution to help make them happen.

Account Management Responsibilities and Tasks

1. Knowledgeable about the working of the public sector and the role of Councils in economic development, business growth and regeneration
2. An understanding of Scotland's and Renfrewshire's economy and associated strategies and policies
3. Accept allocated businesses or key influencers/ partners to work with, or areas (e.g. Inchinnan) to work within and identify and communicate with businesses within these areas
4. Be the lead contact within the Council and coordinate communications with identified businesses, getting to know the business, their senior managers/ owners and the sector/business they operate in
5. Work with other Council staff (and staff amongst partners) who can assist meeting the client managed business needs and requirements
6. Be the ambassador for the Council with client account managed businesses

Indicative Key Performance Indicators for Generic Account Management Responsibilities

- Participate in training provided to support officers fulfil the account management approach to business development
- Identify the businesses, senior managers or owners, sector they operate in, value etc. to have profile that can be briefed to colleagues if necessary (when other might be able to assist companies)
- With own allocated businesses, introduce self and outline role and services of the Council, identify positioning of business re profitability, skills, recruitment etc.
- Identify opportunities for business growth, barriers and whether Council or other stakeholders or partners can support businesses

Appendix 5

Person Specification for Tourism Account Manager

Introduction

Account Management is the role of communicating and representing those working in the tourism sector to answer questions, address concerns and help them work together to promote the destination (for tourism) and their businesses and organisations. It might include internal Council communications and engagement where others inside the Council are best placed to respond to industry needs.

Daily tasks of an Account Manager include overseeing routine issues as well as handling more complicated ones on behalf of their client group(s). A good Account Manager must be customer focused to build trust with customers. They must be a strong communicator to manage their external relationships properly. An efficient Account Manager must also be knowledgeable about operators' businesses, sectoral players and characteristics, markets and customer demands or behaviours that impact tourism performance.

Account Manager Overview

- Operating as the lead point of contact within the Council for any and all matters specific to tourism business development
- Create strong, long-term, trusting relationships with tourism operators, key business executives and stakeholders in both sectors
-
- Build and maintain strong, long-lasting customer relationships
- Liaise with cross-functional internal Council teams to ensure that sector and business needs or queries are met
- Develop trusted advisor relationships with key accounts, customer stakeholders and executive sponsors
- Experienced facilitator who can engage and lead complex groups

Skills

The individual will be educated to degree standard and/ or have industry experience; they may be familiar with account management software (CRM), have a flair for client communication and understand consumer behavior. They will be able to plan ahead, to fit with (say) the awards, funding application timescales, exhibitions, events and conference calendars. They will have systematic reporting capabilities, both internally to Council management and externally to industry groups or representatives. They will also have the proven ability to juggle multiple account management projects at a time, while maintaining sharp attention to detail.

They will be a self-starter and have the capability to initiate new business opportunities for client businesses in tourism to help individual businesses, groups of operators and the destination.

Responsibilities and Tasks

1. Experienced and knowledgeable about the tourism sector and its reach, or the ability to absorb information and operate within the sector
2. Understanding of or quick to assimilate industry characteristics in the tourism industry (e.g. seasonal business models, structures of the sectors, consumer decision making and all other such matters as impact individual business performance and the success of the destination) focusing particularly on commercial operators and businesses
3. A thorough knowledge of Scotland's tourism strategy
4. Has a clear understanding of the challenges facing the tourism sector in terms of margins, skills, recruitment and retention, and have the ability to work with the internal Skills Development Team and the wider

stakeholder groups in education and industry to execute plans which will position Renfrewshire Council well with industry and employers

5. Be visible and available to local businesses – is proactive, well planned, has demonstrable experience in product innovation for businesses and able to develop groups of operators to work together
6. Experienced networker – ability to operate at the highest level in Tourism and Hospitality including with e.g. Scottish Government, VisitScotland to represent Renfrewshire
7. Has a clear understanding of Destination Management
8. Is a strong and effective communicator who can work seamlessly across the Council to engage, inform and effect change – particularly with OneRen/ Marketing/ Elected Members
9. Will lead, work with partners and support others to implement support for Green/ Sustainable activities in the area – positioning Renfrewshire as a green destination
10. Will engage with industry awards – VisitScotland/ Thistle Awards/ CIS/ HIT Scotland/ Sustainability Awards to enhance the reputation of Renfrewshire

Indicative Key Performance Indicators for the Tourism Account Manager

- **Within 6 months**

- Have Industry Group formed and operational, with effective reporting into/out of Council
- Have full and comprehensive dataset of all operating companies developed within Renfrewshire (These should be profiled, their activity, owners/ managers, markets, and an understanding of what they bring to the area in terms of visitor numbers, spend, employment, supply chain requirements, green credentials, training etc.)
- Initiate a programme of familiarisation visits for the tourism and hospitality sector to get to know and be engaged with Paisley Museum and Art Gallery, so operators can tie in their marketing with the new facilities
- Work with OneRen and Council Marketing on marketing collaboration to encourage tourism and hospitality sector to work with Museum and Art Gallery and Town Hall
- Set up or be part of the programme VisitScotland familiarisation visits – 1 for UK and 1 International, working in partnership with Industry Group – to be delivered late 2023/early 24
- Student placement/support programme from UWE to Tourism Industry
- Monthly internal reporting to the business development team

- **Within One Year**

- Have a demonstrable portfolio of tourism and hospitality operators with whom the Council is working with on business development
- Collaborative tourism operators' marketing initiatives to promote the destination
- Forward programme of familiarisation visits organised
- Press and publicity opportunities realised with Council Marketing



To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park – Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan and Castle Semple Vision Document

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Economy and Regeneration Board of the development of a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP) which sets out a number of projects to enhance infrastructure and relieve visitor pressure points at Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks.
- 1.2 A copy of the STIDP can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.3 This report also provides an update on the consultation exercise, which was undertaken to support the STIDP, as well as progress on the development of a future Castle Semple Vision document.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Board:
- (i) Approves the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP) as a basis for further development and delivery of proposals, including the preparation of bids for major capital funding streams.
 - (ii) Authorises the Head of Economy and Development to conduct a series of feasibility studies to support the next stages of development for the STIDP.
 - (iii) Notes the intention to produce a long-term Castle Semple Vision.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2022, the Council were successful in securing funding from VisitScotland to produce a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP) for Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks.

The plan sets out short to medium term tourism infrastructure solutions and a programme of phased investment over the next five years. In particular, the plan:-

- identifies high level requirements for strategic tourism infrastructure;
- considers the future role of Castle Semple/Muirshiel Country Parks in the wider context of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and the emerging Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan;
- provides a catalyst for attracting inward investment to implement both short to medium term projects and those in the longer-term.

3.2 This report summarises outcomes from the STIDP process to date and next steps.

4 Consultation and Engagement

4.1 The STIDP was developed through detailed consultation with Park staff, Council officers and key local stakeholders such as the RSPB, along with desk-based analysis and site visits to Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks. This included: -

- Engagement with Elected Members and Senior Officers with operational responsibility for Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.
- Engagement with The Villages Local Partnership (a group of seven local Community Councils (Lochwinnoch, Howwood, Kilbarchan, Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Elderslie, Houston).
- Wider Stakeholder & Public Consultation – An in-person event hosted at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre on 23 February 2023 was attended by approximately 80 stakeholders, residents, and park users, with a survey also available online. In total 136 consultee responses were received.

4.2 Outcomes from the consultation (Appendix 2) identified key priorities for both short and medium/long term projects at Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks. Respondents' highest priorities were:

- *Short Term (all at Castle Semple)*
 - 1. New Toilet facilities
 - 2. Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility
 - 3. Upgraded Trails & nature lookouts/hides
- *Medium / Longer Term*
 - 1. New Additional Visitor Centre & Café Facility
 - 2. Upgraded Castle Semple Visitor Centre
 - 3. Muirshiel Country Park Centre Upgrade

- 4.3 Additional priorities from the consultation included the enhancement of paths and wayfinding, improvements to watersports facilities (changing/showers) and improvements to connectivity, particularly in relation to active travel and public transport.

5 STIDP Priorities

- 5.1 The consultation outcomes have informed the priorities identified within the STIDP, particularly in relation to access, connections to sustainable travel choices and the provision of adequate toilet facilities on the site. The three 'high' priority projects identified are:

- *Priority 1: New Toilet Facilities* Demolish the outdated toilet block, providing a new facility on the existing site. This will be designed to improve accessibility and provide a small changing area for independent watersports users and/or bike hire hub plus additional cycle parking.
- *Priority 2: Railway Bridge Safe Movement & Connections.* This action would address pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular conflicts at the railway bridge (Church St/Lochlip Road) with new junction markings (white lining/hazard marking/cycle markings to road and cycleway plus sightline improvements.
- *Priority 3: Public Transport Connections (CS-Lochwinnoch Stn)-* Improve legibility ease of connections and provide appropriate signage for Lochwinnoch Rail Station, RSPB, and Castle Semple with information on including, for example, active travel trails, Castle Semple Loch, Barr Loch and CMRP. Amend/Improve existing crossing, white road markings and provision of safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.

- 5.2 A further 5 short term projects were also recommended (see STID plan page 60 at Appendix 1). These projects include improvements to wayfinding, active travel, boardwalks/trails, improvements to public realm and a play park at Muirshiel Visitor Centre.

6 Castle Semple Vision

- 6.1 To develop future aspirations for Castle Semple work is also progressing on the preparation of a vision document which considers the long-term promotion of Castle Semple Gateway as a 'regional destination' for environmental education, leisure, recreation and tourism.
- 6.2 The vision document will outline key aspirations and conceptual plans for Castle Semple and surrounding assets, which will form the basis of a conversation to develop a future masterplan for the site.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 To support progress and delivery of actions from the STIDP, officers will utilise existing regeneration budgets, such as the Place Investment Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund to conduct feasibility and detailed design studies to further develop several of the short-term priorities highlighted in the plan.

If feasible, officers will then consider capital funding to deliver these priorities. Any delivery will be progressed in partnership with the local community and key stakeholders.

- 7.2 Officers will look to finalise a draft of the vision document before the next meeting of the Clyde Muirshiel Liaison Group.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No immediate additional finance is sought. All funding in the short-term is accounted for within existing Council budget and secured external funding.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community Planning** –
 - *Reshaping our place, our economy, and our future: Renfrewshire Council is working with stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for culturally led regeneration, providing support to make best use of heritage assets.*
 - *Building strong, safe, and resilient communities: working in partnership with local groups and organisations to achieve positive outcomes.*
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** - None.
7. **Equality and Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website. An Equality Impact Assessment is being prepared as part of the project requirements.
8. **Health and Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risks** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** - Recognising Tourism Outlook 2030.

13. Climate Risk - No identified impacts at present.

List of Background Papers – None.

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CMRP CASTLE SEMPLE / MUIRSHIEL COUNTRY PARKS

STRATEGIC TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Place Making Framework
Investment Plan for Visitor & Tourism Infrastructure



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01

Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Renfrewshire Council (the Council) has commissioned the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP) to better understand the future role of Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks in the wider context of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park (CMRP) and the emerging Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan.

The study (including the STIDP at section 5) seeks to identify high level requirements for strategic tourism infrastructure development at Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks that form key gateway facilities to CMRP.

Since being built in the 1990s, Muirshiel and Castle Semple Country Parks have witnessed significant growth in visitor numbers with resultant pressures on facilities, services, and local infrastructure. The Council are keen to translate increasing visitor demand into a long-term opportunity to promote the Country Parks as 'gateways' within CMRP and develop a major regional level tourism strategy based around outdoor activity, contact with nature, active leisure and health and well-being. It should be noted that current facilities are at capacity and unable to capitalise on the opportunity that an increased value on outdoor green/blue space offers.

The study seeks to address:

- Context and setting of CMRP (incorporating Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks and setting out the Strategic Vision and Opportunity).
- Define future gateway and destination role of Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks.
- Set out a programme for progressive phased investment.

Consultation has included Renfrewshire Council Members, local stakeholders, and tourism/regeneration/place officers across Council Services along with the RSPB, VisitScotland and the Ranger Team at CMRP. In addition:

- The Client Steering Group has helped to coordinate consultation through a Clyde Muirshiel Liaison Group.
- A Consultation Event was hosted within the Castle Semple Visitor Centre in late February and supported with an online Consultation Room. 60-80 stakeholders attended the event with 15 completed survey forms.
- The online 'Consultation Room' (available on computers, digital devices and phones) allowed wider stakeholders to provide feedback and complete a questionnaire on facilities and investment priorities. The online Consultation had a participation level in excess of 540 visits with 136 completed questionnaires.

The study has sought to develop set of prioritised project proposals with input from operators, stakeholders and local community interest groups which will meet the core opportunities and investment needs at Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks. Renfrewshire Council is keen that future investment is strongly aligned to the emerging Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan.

1.2 Aims & Objectives

The Plan will help to identify areas of opportunity and identify actions to strengthen regional tourism infrastructure, support placemaking and address the needs of both residents and visitors. Furthermore, it will create a framework to define future planning to assist in securing additional funding for projects within the Country Parks.

The aim of the project is to develop a place-based framework for tourism development, that seeks to create a destination gateway for Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks set within the wider context of CMRP.

The Plan objectives are to:

- review the opportunities, requirements, challenges and current and future capacity of the site to meet the needs of visitors, whilst continuing to support and service the varied specialist groups/users into the future.
- define the requirements for investment within the site and to set out a programme for investment over the short, medium, longer term along with any priorities and projects eligible under RTIF funding.
- outline how the existing visitor infrastructure can be enhanced through the delivery of improved services with stronger alignment to deliver low carbon and sustainable travel choices for leisure and outdoor recreation users.
- demonstrate how stronger local and regional links can be developed to ensure investment in improved infrastructure and facilities can be a catalyst for positive economic recovery and area wide regeneration (post-Covid).
- Identify the key visitor and site infrastructure requirements to address visitor pressures within Renfrewshire's Country Parks that could be advanced through an application for RTIF support.

In summary, the Plan seeks to both align and build on the emerging ideas of the Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan, creating a comprehensive place-based framework for Castle Semple as the primary visitor gateway to CMRP in Renfrewshire.



1.3 Report Structure

The report is presented in in six sections as follows:

1. **Introduction**
Describing purpose, aims and objectives of this study set within the context of national and local policies.
2. **Contextual Assessment**
Overview of CMRP and the role of Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks including key issues, place and visitor profile.
3. **CMRP – Developing the Country Park ‘Gateway’ Facilities**
Developing Castle Semple as Renfrewshire’s Gateway to CMRP.
4. **Strategic Vision**
Setting out the broad vision and aspirations in the context of emerging tourism planning.
5. **Castle Semple Country Strategic Tourism Infrastructure**
Promoting Castle Semple as a place-based destination.
6. **Project Development & Next Steps**
Identifying strategic programme of investment and key project components of delivery strategy and phasing.



02

Contextual Assessment

2.1 Policy Context

The policy context contains national, regional and local policies. National policy has in recent years provided a stronger policy framework around the protection and enhancement of environmental assets, climate change, health and well-being (including active communities, place qualities and place-making). The national policy framework sets out an ambitious programme for tourism growth.

NATIONAL

Scotland's Climate Change Plan

Scotland's ambitious climate change legislation sets a target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. Climate change is the single greatest threat to Scotland's environment and may affect the delicate balance of Scotland's ecosystems and transform Scotland's habitats and biodiversity, adding to existing pressures. Regional Parks and Country Parks have a role in education and supporting the transition to net zero.

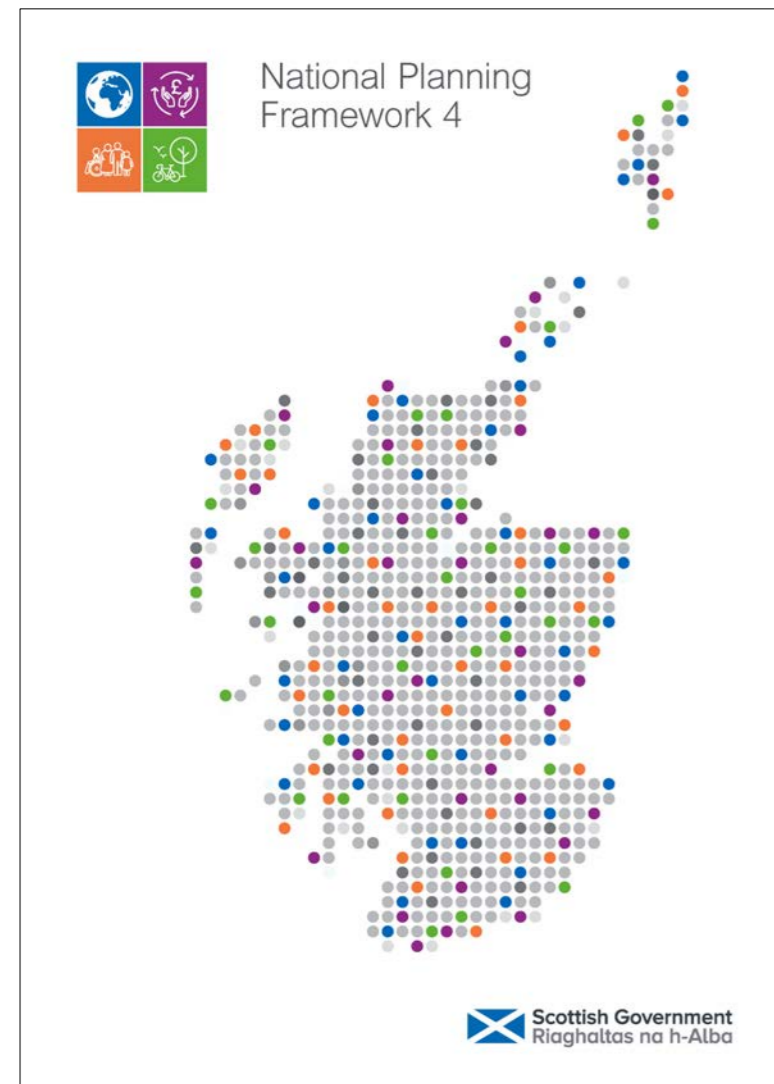
National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030 ¹

Sets out the national Tourism Strategy for Scotland to be world leaders in 21st century tourism built around the key priorities of our passionate people, our thriving places, our diverse businesses, our memorable experiences.

Tourism is an important industry in Scotland and plays a significant role in the country's economy. Tourism is acknowledged as having a significant role in delivering Scotland's wider economic strategy as it cuts across every sector and touches every part of Scotland's economy. Tourism can help to stimulate investment and development across all and help to create jobs and support local businesses in areas that may otherwise struggle to attract investment. However, this ambition goes beyond that; it will look to enrich the lives of those who live here and visit us; it will protect and preserve place quality and has an important role in acting as a global pioneers for responsible tourism.

The National Tourism Strategy places an emphasis on Responsible Tourism as a strategic priority. This looks to ensure that tourism leads to improved community wellbeing and nurtures thriving places across Scotland.

¹ National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030, VisitScotland



National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)¹

NPF4 sets out a national spatial strategy for Scotland and defines national planning policy. The NPF4 sets out a number of spatial principles relevant to the planning for rural assets. The following 4 spatial principles are relevant:

- **Conserving and recycling assets:** We will make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure and services, locking in carbon, minimising waste, and building a circular economy.
- **Local living:** We will support local liveability and improve community health and wellbeing by ensuring people can easily access services, greenspace, learning, work and leisure locally.
- **Rebalanced development:** We will target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand.
- **Rural revitalisation:** We will encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognising the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together.

¹ NPF4, Scottish Government

The NPF4 forms a core part of the Development Plan and sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the country's spatial development over the next 10-20 years. The spatial principles and national spatial strategy support the planning and delivery of:

- **Sustainable places**
Will help to deliver on core national outcomes for the environment, communities, economy addressing a range of policies to tackle climate change, reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity, protect and enhance natural places, greenbelts, sustainable transport and promote a more circular economy.
- **Liveable places**
Will help to deliver on core national outcomes for communities, culture, human rights, children and young people, and health addressing a range of policies to tackle health inequalities, promote healthier lives, enhance blue-green infrastructure and support design quality and place.
- **Productive places**
Will help to deliver on core national outcomes associated with fair work and the business, economy, poverty, communities helping to support a greener, fairer, and more inclusive wellbeing economy and addressing a range of policies associated with Community Wealth Building, culture and creativity, rural development and tourism.,

REGIONAL

GRI Rural Community Tourism Strategy

The GRI Rural Tourism Strategy was commissioned for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area under Scottish Government's Rural Communities Testing Change Fund, to identify ways of supporting rural communities. The strategy aims to enhance the economic and social benefits of sustainable tourism for local communities while minimising any negative impacts on the environment.

The strategy sets out a range of measures to support rural tourism, including the development of new tourism products and experiences, the promotion of sustainable tourism practices, and the improvement of tourism infrastructure and services. It also seeks to encourage greater collaboration between different stakeholders in the tourism sector, including businesses, local communities, and government agencies. The GRI Rural Tourism Strategy recognises that rural tourism is an important source of employment and economic growth for many rural areas of Scotland. It also acknowledges that tourism can have negative impacts on the environment and local communities if not managed carefully. Therefore, the strategy emphasises the need for sustainable tourism practices that balance economic growth with environmental protection and social well-being. The strategy emphasises the need for sustainable tourism practices that balance economic growth with environmental protection and social well-being.

LOCAL

Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy 2020-2030

A key challenge defined within Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy is to raise the profile of Renfrewshire nationally and internationally as a natural location for inward and established business investment, for attracting talent and as a place to visit. A core intervention under this challenge is to sustain visitor growth in the long term (a new visitor attraction) and build our capacity for tourism growth.

Renfrewshire Local Development Plan

The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan sets out an ambitious Spatial Strategy that provides a framework for the protection and enhancement of Renfrewshire's diverse natural environment, built and cultural heritage assets and delivery of economic and infrastructure investment. Furthermore, it guides the future use of land to assist in creating strong communities and attractive places.

The LDP includes a revitalised recognition of the built, natural, cultural and heritage tourism offering of Renfrewshire and the important contribution that the tourism sector makes to the Renfrewshire economy. Key policy areas include:

- **Sustainable Economic Growth**
Deliver successful places, based upon balancing the relationship between the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the area.
- **Sustainable Travel**
Demonstrate that there is good accessibility to a range of sustainable travel modes, based on links to the hierarchy of walking, cycling, public transport networks.
- **Tourism**
Proposals for sustainable tourism development including new or expanded tourism-related facilities – (Policy E4).
- **Built Environment**
Protect and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment and be of a design that is appropriate to reflect the siting, density, character, landscape setting and identity of the surrounding area.
- **Village Centres**
Local Service Centres (Lochwinnoch) perform a vital role in supporting many local communities within Renfrewshire. These centres have more localised catchment areas providing a range of local services. Small local village centres (Howwood/Kilbarchan) which perform a vital role in supporting local communities within Renfrewshire's villages.

Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan (Emerging)

Renfrewshire Council is developing a Tourism Action Plan which is at early consultation stage. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on the positive experience of hosting successful events and delivering an energetic cultural programme and how to build on and complement this in the future.

Tourism is a key sector within the Renfrewshire economy. Covid had a dramatic impact on tourism with changes to patterns of normal visitation which resulted in emphasis on day visits, increased use of countryside and "staycation" holidays. This has led to pressures on visitor destination (excess demand) and extended visits and bookings associated with self-catering, countryside visits, and activity. These circumstances resulted in more of Renfrewshire's outdoor spaces being used than normal.

Whilst there is a gradual return to pre-Covid conditions, these trends persist. Overseas travel to Scotland is not expected to return to pre-Covid levels until 2023 or 2024, while UK self-catering remains buoyant. Other impacts of Covid include the prioritisation of "green" and sustainable activity, recognition of the role the sector has in contributing to zero carbon targets, the requirement for a far stronger community foundation for determining tourism priorities, and the importance of digital on all aspects of tourism.

The emerging Tourism Action Plan recognises the importance of prioritising tourism and the need to develop a strong tourism offer based around the following six thematic areas:

1. **Collaboration** - public, private and third sectors working together to support tourism across the region and a tourism network that facilitates and urges operators and organisations to enter into partnerships and joint activity (in e.g., marketing)
2. **Infrastructure** – especially around active travel provision linking key tourism destinations
3. **Rural Renfrewshire** – capitalising on the outdoor activities and landscape attributes of the district to build a stronger appeal to markets – this would include continuing development at Castle Semple
4. **Paisley** - continuing to build on the strengths of Paisley as a destination in its own right, capitalising on its strong regional appeal, signposting to our other regional destinations, assets and experiences
5. **Events** - building on the success of the strong programme of events to drive additional visitor numbers and highlight further opportunities for the regeneration of communities
6. **Business tourism** – addressing this "hidden" sector of conferences, events, academic and corporate market opportunities in venues across the area

Strong Strategic Policy Alignment

National, Regional and Local policies (and importantly the new National Planning Framework (NPF4) establish a strong policy framework aligning the key national outcomes with spatial principles, with economic, environmental and community policies defined at the regional and local level.

CMRP delivers an important contribution to sustainable, liveable and productive places. It directly supports the following key target policy areas of NPF4:

Sustainable Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling the climate and nature crises Climate mitigation and adaptation Biodiversity Natural places Soils Forestry, woodland and trees Historic assets and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green belts Brownfield land, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings Coastal development Energy Zero waste Sustainable transport
Liveable Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design, quality and place Local living /20 minute neighbourhoods Rural homes Infrastructure first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat and cooling Blue and green infrastructure Play, recreation and sport Flood risk and water management
Productive Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community wealth building Local centres Rural development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism Culture and creativity Minerals

Clyde Muirshiel is at the forefront of addressing climate change and the nature crises alongside promoting quality of place, healthier communities, rural diversification and tourism. Critically it needs to ensure it can continue to invest in its natural capital, infrastructure and educational programmes to deliver strong national, regional and local outcomes.



2.2 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

2.2.1 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

CMRP covers an area of 265sq km across three local authorities, namely Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council and North Ayrshire Council. The regional park was established through the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 and modified by the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1981. In 1996 the three authorities established a Joint Committee 'The Park Authority' which initially managed all functions related to tourism, recreation, and environmental management across the park area. However, the Park Authority was disbanded in 2020 along with the Joint Committee. Each of the three Councils have now assumed full responsibility for the park management and the delivery of services within their geographical boundary.

Renfrewshire Council continues to work with the other local authorities to ensure that the park is managed effectively, and that its natural and cultural heritage is protected and enhance promoting sustainable tourism and rural economic growth within the region.

2.2.2 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Aspirations, Aims and Priorities

As one of Scotland's designated regional parks CMRP retains the three principal aspirations that were set out in the Park Strategy (2016 – 2021). These were:

- “To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, biodiversity and cultural heritage of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.
- To encourage and enable learning, understanding and enjoyment of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.
- To promote and foster environmentally sustainable development for the social and economic well-being of the people and communities within the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park area.”

Priority: Leisure Activity & Health.
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.

Priority: Education & Outdoor Learning
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.

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

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park: Park Strategy 2016-2021

2.2.3 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park's Role

The role of the regional parks is to provide fresh air, open spaces and responsible recreational opportunities close to where people live. In rural and relatively remote wild hill country, this requires above all, enhanced transport links from the main centres of population – particularly for those without a car which is often young people and those with limited financial resources.

2.2.4 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park's Tourism, Recreation Environment Designations

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park encompasses publicly and privately owned land. Most visits to the park are for recreation or access purposes and are supported by a network of paths, trails, and cycle routes. The Park provides a unique habitat for many different species of plant and animal life and includes 5 sites designated a SSSI's (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), one SPA (Special Protection Area) and WLA's (Wild Land Areas) - identified as nationally important. Almost 85 % of land within the park is in private ownership and is put to a wide range of uses including farming, commercial forestry, shooting, the supply of public water and renewable energy.

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 offering a diverse range of habitats supporting a regional ecosystem of identified biodiversity value.

The Park's landscape is an important draw for a diverse range of recreational users including hill walkers, wildlife enthusiasts and cyclists. Visitors are also drawn to the area's heritage, with the Regional Park including a number of scheduled monuments, listed buildings, landscape features and places of interest. Overall, CMRP is a high value and important natural resource with excellent accessibility from the Central Belt and Southwest Scotland and offers a diverse range of recreational opportunities alongside important environmental ecosystem services recognised as of regional importance.

The Country Parks (Castle Semple and Muirshiel) provide important gateway sites and the following features forming core visitor destinations:

- Greenock Cut Visitor Centre
- Thom / Gryfe /Daff /Outerwards Reservoirs
- Lunderston Bay & Clyde Coast
- Misty Law / Burnt Hill /Hill of Stake
- Muirhead & Camphill Reservoirs
- Castle Semple Country Park
- Castle Semple Visitor Centre
- Castle Semple Watersports Centre
- RSPB Lochwinnoch and Aird Meadow
- Barr Loch Reserve
- Muirshiel Visitor Centre
- Kilbirnie Loch

2.2.5 Regional Park Tourism Data 2018-2022

The Regional Park has three visitor centres which are located at Castle Semple, Muirshiel and Greenock Cut. It is estimated that the park receives an estimated 1.5-1.8 million visitors annually¹. Renfrewshire Council collects visitor data based on car count for Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Park visitor centres. The data suggests visitor numbers to these facilities are of the order of 485,000 visitors.

Key regional tourism data² indicates:

- The city region offers a significant day trip market with circa 3.5million people living within 90 minutes' drive time. However, Glasgow is also a driver for overnight and international tourism and its proximity to the park therefore creates an additional opportunity.

A number of visitors arrive through connections to Prestwick international airport/Northern Ireland ferry services or from the South-West of Scotland including North, South & East Ayrshire.

¹ Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Data, 2012

² VisitScotland Regional Tourism Data 2019

- The Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley major attractions (paid/free) would include CMRP and Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks. The RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve receives approximately 25,000 visitors¹ annually, with Visitscotland recording 26,217 in 2019²

A summary of some of the key regional tourism data from Visitscotland Glasgow and Clyde Valley Factsheet is shown in graphic summary form together with some projections for the Regional Park's facilities within Renfrewshire.

¹ Visitor Experience Manager, RSPB

² Visitscotland Tourism Statistics 2019

Tourism Built on Core Strengths



*Data Extracted from VisitScotland Gt. Glasgow & Clyde Valley Factsheet 2019 & Renfrewshire Council Economic Strategy 2020-2030)

2.2.6 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Visitor Numbers

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park have collated visitor numbers over a number of years. The visitor counts are tabulated by year based on car counter data between 2015-2018. For years 2019-2022 full car counter data has not been available, and figures are locally derived estimates.

CMRP (see table below) has witnessed steady and sustained growth in visitor numbers over the period 2015-2022. Notable increases in visitor numbers are indicated in 2012/13 (primarily at Lunderston Bay) and 2018/20 resulting from Covid. Outwith these periods growth has followed a broad 2-3% year on year growth. Castle Semple numbers have increased from 338,000 in 2010 to 430,000 in 2021.

Castle Semple Country Park and Visitor Centre is by far the most visited element of CMRP in Renfrewshire with significantly smaller numbers visiting Muirshiel Country Park and Visitor Centre. Greenock Cut and Lunderston Bay are locations operated by other authorities and are outwith Renfrewshire as shown in the above table. Visitor numbers for Muirshiel Country Park and the Visitor Centre are based on car counts and are less reliable at this location.

Centre / Facility	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Castle Semple	338000	339000	345800	344000	320000	312911	346209	332950	370442	459514*	412192*	430192*
Muirshiel	35800	35850	35900	35950	36000	36047	39463	36964	39358	46845	55045*	55045
Greenock Cut	69000	68000	68500	69000	71000	79440	69875	67540	68279*	71625*	94672*	94672
Lunderston Bay	110000	70000	188000	199400	210000	221862	182108	222372	228920	270614	314596	314596
TOTAL	552800	512850	638200	648350	637000	650260	637655	659826	706999	848598	876505	894505
Percentage Increase	0	-7%	24%	2%	-2%	2%	-2%	3%	7%	20%	3%	2%

* Renfrewshire Council locally derived estimate, full car counter data not available

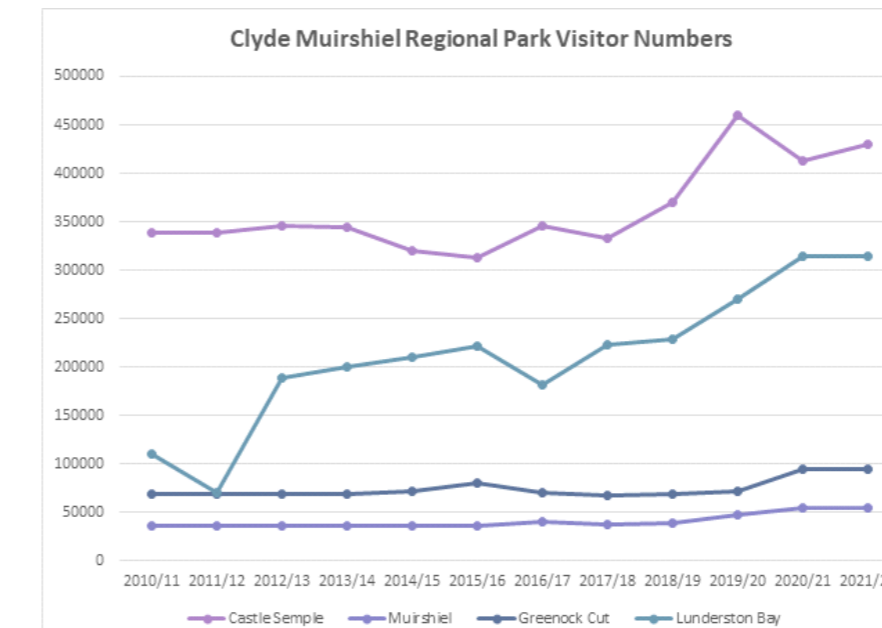


Figure 1: CMRP Visitor numbers broken down to each of the four core destinations.

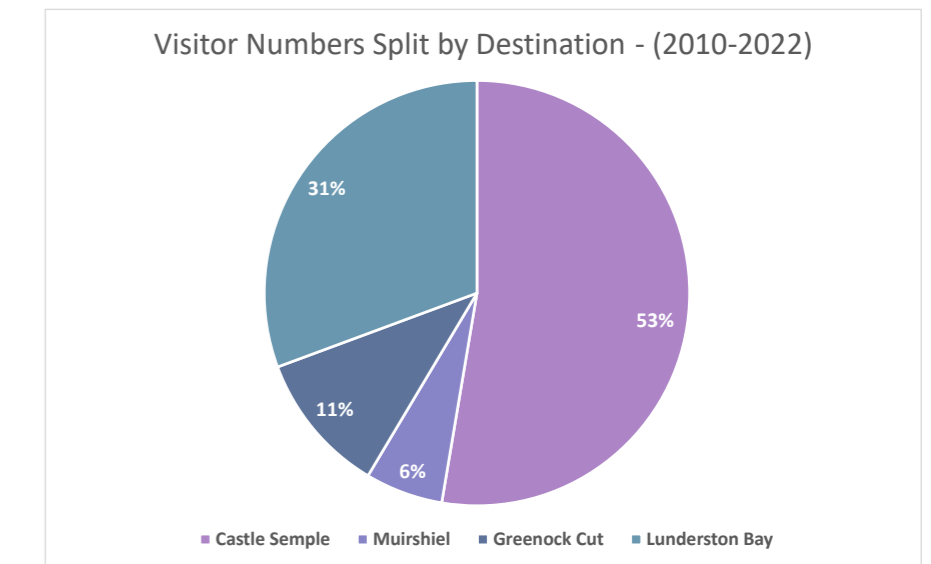
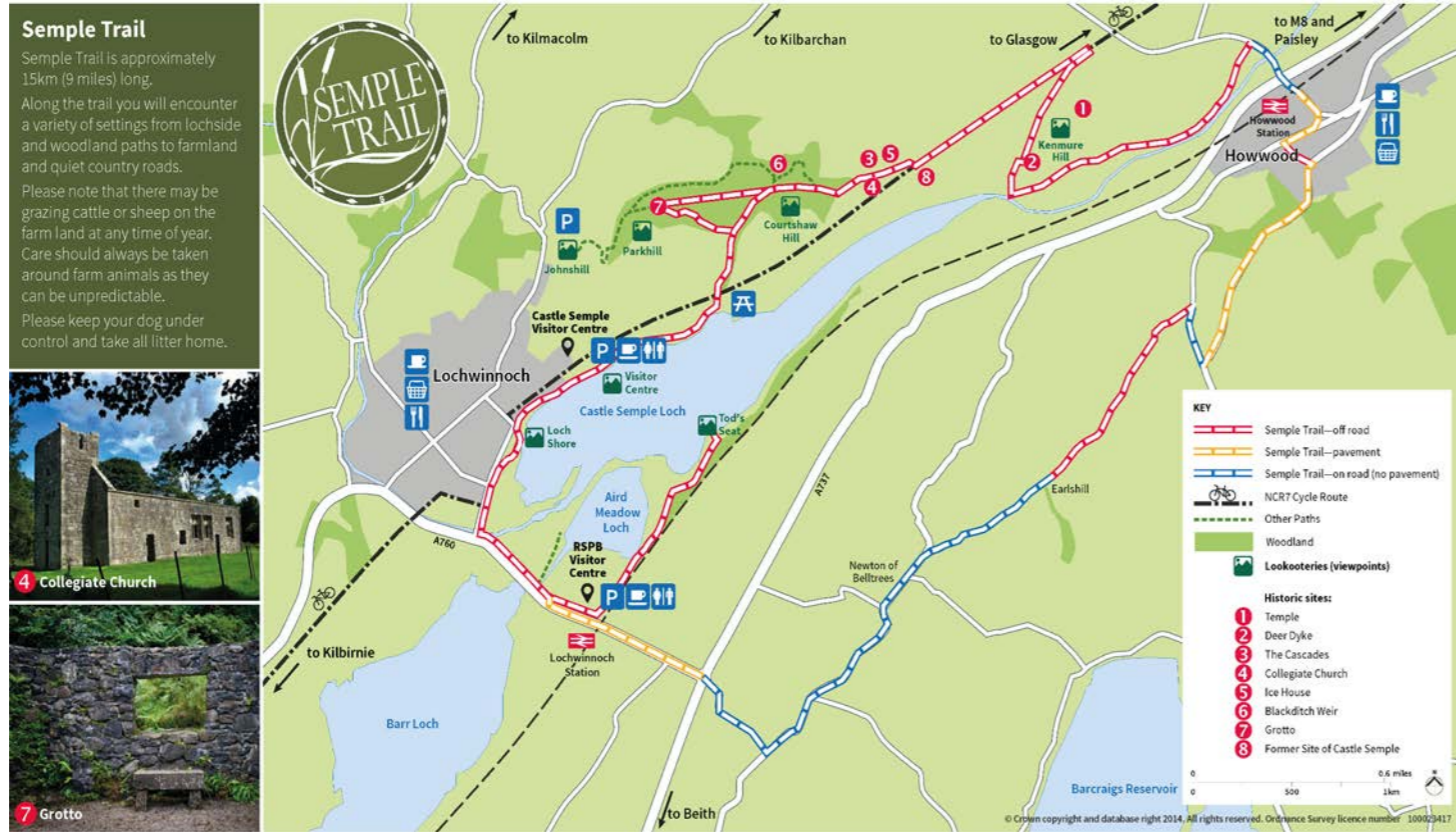


Figure 2: This chart represents the same data as tabled above. It should be noted that the Castle Semple Visitor Centre secures over half (53%) of all visitors to the core destinations of the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park with the Muirshiel Visitor Centre attracting the least (6%). Greenock Cut and Lunderston Bay are not within Renfrewshire.



Semple Trail
 Semple Trail is approximately 15km (9 miles) long. Along the trail you will encounter a variety of settings from lochside and woodland paths to farmland and quiet country roads. Please note that there may be grazing cattle or sheep on the farm land at any time of year. Care should always be taken around farm animals as they can be unpredictable. Please keep your dog under control and take all litter home.



2.3 Castle Semple & Muirshiel Country Parks

2.3.1 Castle Semple Country Park

Castle Semple Country Park (CSCP) was formed from part of the original estate centred around the Loch. Castle Semple mansion house itself burnt down at the beginning of the 20th century. The site was acquired by Renfrewshire County Council and designated as a Country Park in 1971. The CSCP with its connections to public transport (Lochwinnoch rail and bus services) forms an important gateway to the more remote, open countryside of CMRP.

Castle Semple Country Park Visitor Centre

Castle Semple Visitor Centre is operated by Renfrewshire Council. The centre is located on the north shore of Castle Semple Loch alongside the National Cycle Route 7 (NCR7) and only 1.5km from Lochwinnoch Railway Station. The Visitor Centre is open throughout the year and includes recreational, hospitality and educational facilities with a strong focus on education supported by the Ranger Service. Countryside Rangers provide an environmental education programme and support visitor services with advice about local walking routes, trails, and wildlife viewpoints. Additional attractions and activities include walking, cycling, wildlife watching, indoor and outdoor facilities, basic café- refreshments and a retail offering.

Castle Semple Activity Centre - Sailability Centre of Excellence

The Castle Semple Centre is recognised as a Royal Yachting Association Sailability 'Centre of Excellence' – the first in Scotland (awarded in 2013). The centre has both specialist facilities, staff and equipment to accommodate people of all abilities in the delivery of watersports training such including sailing, kayaking and canoeing and power boating. The centre provides accessible stage courses for youths aged 8-15 years and level courses and taster sessions for adults (16+). The centre also offers accessible sports days throughout the year as well as disability open days and competitive/non-competitive events throughout the country.

The Castle Semple Activity Centre additionally has been recognised as a Scottish Cycling Disability Hub. In 2017, the Park's Castle Semple Centre was designated as one of only two HSBCUK Disability Hubs by Scottish Cycling in recognition of the Park's varied cycle equipment, specially trained staff and commitment to paracycling development as part of a fully inclusive outdoor activity programme.

Semple Trail

The Semple Trail starts at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre and links a series of visitor attractions between the villages of Lochwinnoch and Howwood. The Semple Trail comprise a series of walks and cycle routes around Castle Semple Loch, Parkhill Wood, Collegiate Church and Kenmure Hill Temple with connections to Lochwinnoch, Howwood and the RSPB Visitor Centre. Other parts of the trail can be explored from links from the NCR7 cycle route.

Sailing / Rowing / Stand-up Paddleboard (SUP) & Windsurfing and Fishing Clubs

A core element of the Country Park is access to Castle Semple Loch and the use of the waterbody for water-based recreation (see above). In addition to the Centre facilities operated by the Council, a diverse range of water sports facilities and activities are offered by independent clubs on land leased from Renfrewshire Council. The clubs include:

- Castle Semple Rowing Club**
 The Club provides an open membership-based facility providing for recreational rowing including training and education operating from a purpose-built clubhouse.
- Castle Semple Sailing Club**
 The Club based facility (open membership) provides for sailing and education on Castle Semple Loch and manages facilities to enable enjoyment of the waterbody for recreational sailing
- Ride 63 Community Cycle Club**
 The Ride 63 is a Community Cycling Club based primarily at Castle Semple Visitor Centre. Club objectives: a) Development of infrastructure for the sport of cycling in Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and in the wider area.
- Clyde Windsurfing & Stand-up Paddleboard (SUP) Club**
 The Club provides a range of services including adult and junior coaching in windsurfing and Stand-Up-Paddleboard (SUP) including beginners, experienced, touring and race training.
- Fishing Clubs**
 Fishing is permitted on Castle Semple Loch. The Countryside Ranger Service manage permit fishing on the West bank of the Loch. Castle Angling Club and St Winnoch Angling Club cover other beats.

Castle Semple Visitor Infrastructure

Public Transport (rail/bus) and National Cycle routes (NCR7) all have important roles in supporting travel choice. Key aspects of the recreational and transport network are the rail/bus connections that offer non-car-based accessibility and reduce car dependency. Extending travel choice by supporting sustainable modes through public transport are part of the Council's priorities to support delivery of national transport outcomes.

The Country Park has a range of supporting facilities with most of the built facilities developed during the 1980's as timber log buildings designed specifically for visitor use and with limited capacity for adaptability and energy efficiency. The main visitor infrastructure includes:

- Public parking for 112 cars +DDA parking with electric charging stations (6 public/4 staff).
- Cycle shelter and cycle racks for c40+ bikes.
- Hardstandings for minibus / coach use.
- Public Toilet Building separate from Visitor Centre – structural condition requires replacement.
- Path connections to NCR7 and off-road route to the Lochwinnoch Rail Station.
- Basic Café facility.
- An Education and training space plus offices for Activity Centre & Countryside Ranger Service.
- Pontoons and landing facilities for non-motorised watersport users also used through agreement of the Activity Centre by local Rowing / Sailing /Windsurf & SUP Clubs.

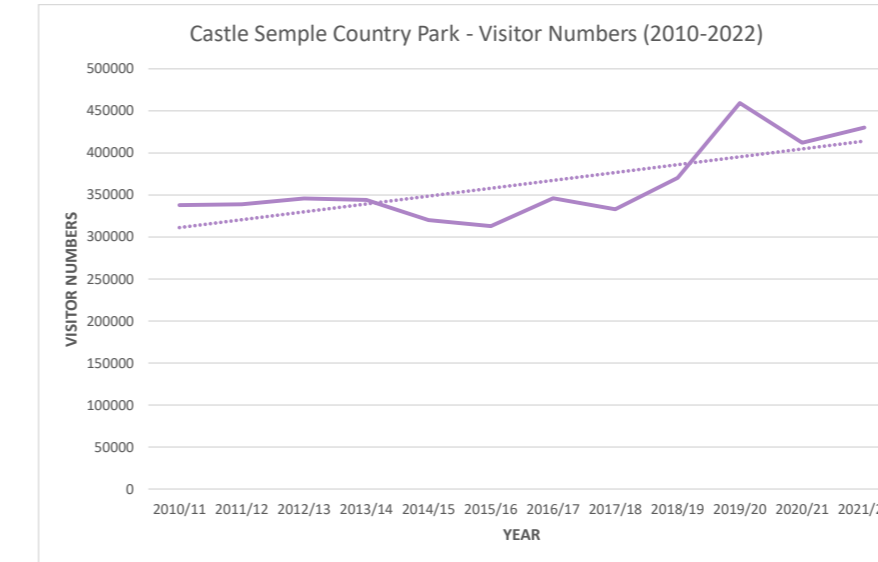


Figure 3: Castle Semple Country Park: Growth in visitor numbers 2010-2022 with trend line indicated in dotted line. See section 3.2.1.

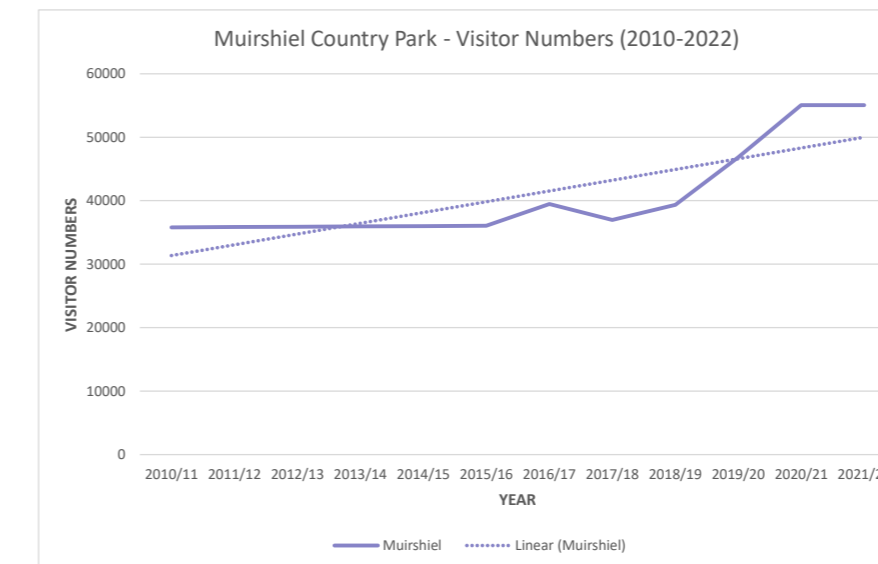


Figure 4: Muirshiel Country Park: Growth in visitor numbers 2010-2022 with trend line indicated in dotted line. See section 3.3.1.

2.3.2 Muirshiel Country Park

Muirshiel Country Park was formed on estate grounds of Muirshiel House - a shooting lodge located on the river Calder adjacent to Duchal and Queenside Moor. The site was acquired by Renfrewshire County Council in 1952 and designated as a Country Park in 1970.

Muirshiel Country Park Visitor Centre

Muirshiel Visitor Centre provides a small visitor facility 4 miles from Lochwinnoch located within the hills of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. The centre is home to the Ranger Service and provides basic facilities (toilets/shelter/parking) and the start point of a series of walks and cycle routes. Full time and seasonal countryside rangers operate from the visitor centre.

Walking Trails

Popular walking trails include walks (several circular) to Misty Law, Hill of Stake, Windy Hill and the former barytes mine. Windy Hill is the most popular and family friendly walk whilst others (such as the Hill of Stake - the highest hill in CMRP) are slightly longer (3-4 hrs minimum) and require navigation skills. The heather moors of CMRP are home to one of Britain's rarest Birds of Prey - the Hen Harrier.



3.1 Developing a Plan for Future Investment

The Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks are operated by Renfrewshire Council. The facilities were built in the 1980's to meet the objectives defined within CMRP Plan at that time and to deliver visitor centres which would support both public visitor needs and the Park Countryside Ranger Service.

The Visitor Centres require investment if they are to sustain current activities with respective buildings nearing the end of their design life. Maintaining activity and the current role of the Visitor Centres will require:

- Aligning regional tourism activity and the promotion of outdoor recreation and countryside activity with the Country Parks and developing site specific development plans for facility and visitor management.
- Developing a phased Investment Plan to provide reinvestment in the core Building Assets with the primary focus of promoting Castle Semple as Renfrewshire's 'Gateway' to CMRP and a regional centre of excellence in watersports and responsible countryside recreation.
- Developing wider partnerships with existing adjacent and co-located facilities i.e., RSPB, Watersports Clubs, Sustrans and local communities, to ensure the Country Parks are closely integrated and support regeneration of rural villages and wider local attractions.

The priority for investment needs to be Castle Semple Country Park. Muirshiel Country Park and its Visitor Centre provide access to hill walks and open countryside and its role is complimentary to Castle Semple Country Park.

3.2 Castle Semple Country Park

Castle Semple is the 'gateway' to CMRP in Renfrewshire. The Castle Semple Country Park provides a focus for mixed-use, family-oriented outdoor activity and a high-quality inclusive hub for watersports. The site has a number of important attributes that support sustainable place-making and offer the opportunity to promote development. These include:

The site has a number of important attributes that support sustainable place-making and offer the opportunity to promote development. These include:

- Strategic location offering direct access to strategic transport links including National Cycle Route (NCR7), a mainline railway station and bus based public transport connecting to main population centres. No other regional park offers equivalent and immediate access to a station. Prestwick and Glasgow airports are also within easy reach.
- Strong place appeal and customer base that currently attracts over 50% of all visitors to Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park
- Capacity to deliver diverse range of activity incorporating passive and active leisure on land and on water with strong regional demand and capacity for further growth.
- Environment and place quality with the opportunity to explore a range of environments, heritage assets, habitats and viewpoints offering positive experiences and strong contact with nature.
- Established visitor infrastructure with a Countryside Ranger Service and educational and training support, capable of accommodating people of all abilities within a recognised Centre of Excellence.

3.2.1 Growth in Visitor Numbers (See also Section 2.2.6)

Castle Semple has seen significant growth in visitor numbers over the period 2010-2022. Levels of activity have been consistently high with specific site pressures due to levels of activity throughout the summer peak periods.

Comprehensive visitor data is incomplete due to challenges in collecting data during Covid and during periods where the main Visitor Centres (Castle Semple Country Park/Muirshiel Country Park) were closed or operating under a very restricted operational plan.

The main pressures on visitor use within Renfrewshire portion of CMRP has been at Castle Semple Country Park. These have included:

- Increased cycle activity on the Renfrewshire sections of the National Cycle routes notably NCR 7 (Sunderland-Glasgow-Inverness) and NCR 75 (Edinburgh-Glasgow-Kintyre).
- Increased day visitors to the visitor centre and Country Park locations during Covid and Covid recovery periods including walking, cycling, outdoor recreational activity including during periods when the Visitor Centre was closed.
- Increased walking and day visit activity within Country Parks with strong activity from across local and regional catchments, primarily accessed by walking, cycling or car.

Visitor counts undertaken by the Council have focussed on car counter data which are anecdotally supported by the ranger service and open-mobile data (Strava). Statistics collated by the Council for Castle Semple Country Park indicate See Table and Graphs page XX):

- Increase in Visitor Numbers to Castle Semple Visitor Centre between 2018 and 2019 jumping from 370,442 to 459,514 a 24% increase within the year (see figure X).
- Visitor numbers (car counter data) indicate a fall to 412,192 and 430,129 in 2020 and 2021 albeit that this was not the experience on site which advised visitor numbers/ pressure remained high with no change over 2019 figures and potentially implying a greater access by active travel.
- A sustained level activity of circa 420,000 visitors to Castle Semple Visitor Centre (Car Counter Data collected by Renfrewshire Council 2022) that represents a 13% increase over 2019 figures at a site that was already at capacity.

The graphed data also includes a projection (see Graphs page XX) of the current trend in visitor numbers at Castle Semple. On the current trend numbers are likely to rise to 500,000 in 2024/25 and assuming further investment in the site, 530,000 by 2025/26. These are projections based on current trends.

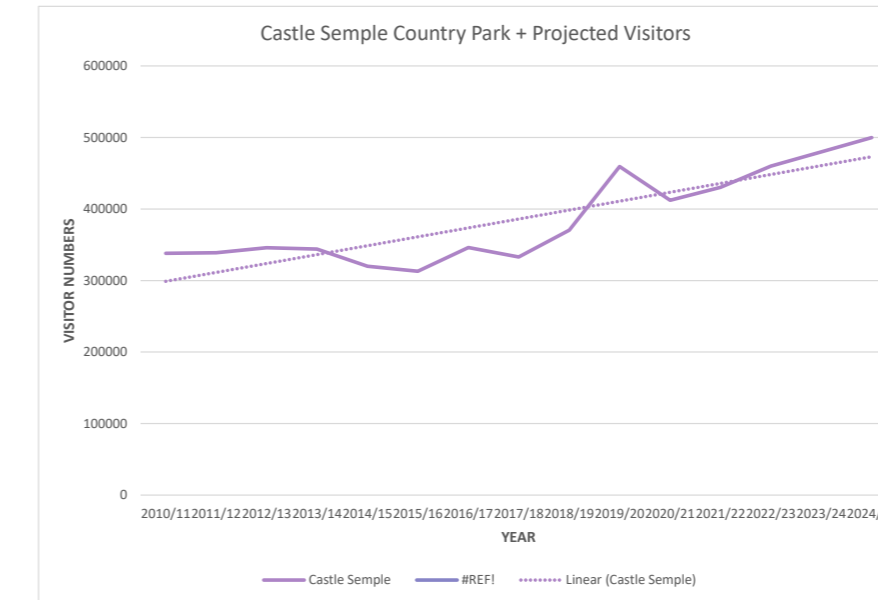


Figure 5: Castle Semple Country Park: Growth in visitor numbers 2010 - 2022 and projected numbers to 2025/26. The projected growth in visitor numbers is based on current post-covid levels of activity on site and the re-establishment of pre-covid annual growth in visitor numbers. The ranger service and levels of activity across the Country Park suggest these figures are probably conservative.

3.2.2 Challenges around Visitor Numbers

The main challenges associated with visitor use and the increase in visitor numbers have been identified during consultation with staff including the centre manager, ranger services other stakeholders and site visits. A consultation event held at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre was well attended and supported by an online survey and questionnaire. The engagement (event and online) recorded issues and concerns across a breadth of stakeholders.

Quality of the Visitor Experience

Peak period reduction in the visitor experience due to numbers of visitors and particularly traffic congestion and traffic movements within the car park, litter management and the inability to effect dispersal of visitors to the wider Country Park and trails due to legibility, poor signage, and information for visitors. The constraints of a long narrow site and the need to balance visitor access with environmental protection and management is a further issue.

Lack of Toilet & Changing Facilities

The enforced intermittent closure of the toilet facilities means that only people on courses, staff and 'users with additional or specific access and mobility needs can reliably access public toilets within the visitor building which has limited capacity and opening hours. This impacts on visitor amenity and site use (i.e., toilets and changing) with concerns around anecdotal public use of woodlands and wider park areas as well as 'dirty toileting' behind buildings when the café and visitor centre is shut.



Safety & Traffic Management

Issues with peak period traffic management and conflicts with active travel users (i.e., walkers, cyclists, recreational users). These are most acute at the entrance area and associated with the use/misuse within the parking bays including non-appropriate use of disability parking/e-charging and public transport e.g., congested site with multi-users with the potential for conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists.

Water Catchment & Site Operational Management

Broad range of site management issues exacerbated by fluctuating water levels and levels of use including over-use of sensitive water-edge areas (with resulting surface erosion) and break-up of paths. These flooding, siltation and water edge issues are also linked with climate change and the need to address integrated water catchment management to create sustainable loch water levels and alleviate community flooding issues.

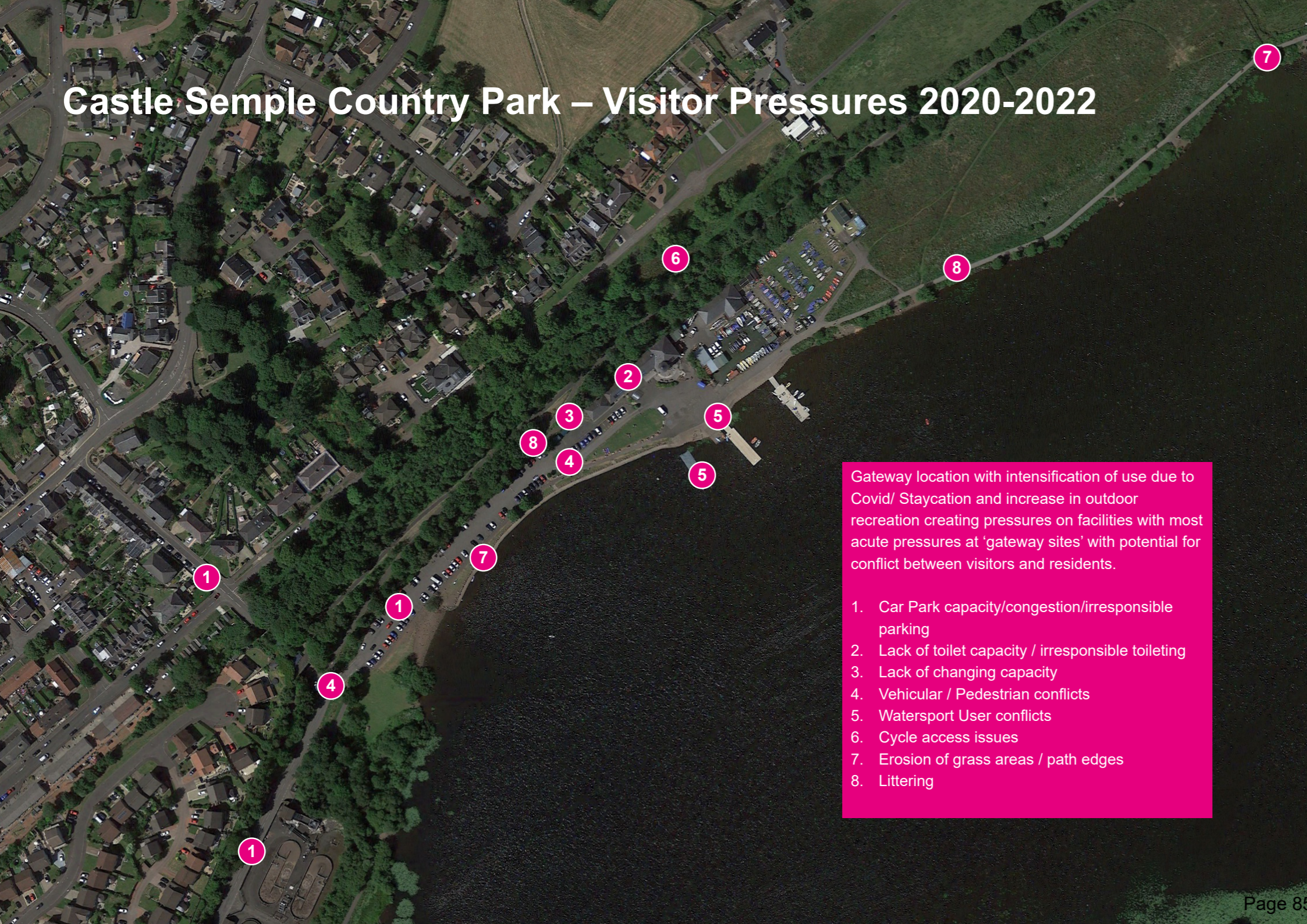
Limited Capacity of the Visitor Centre

The visitor centre provides primarily for educational, watersports and training groups with additional access or support needs and only has limited capacity for day-visitors and capacity for tourism support. There is a need to adopt a more integrated tourism and community planning approach that seeks to build capacity across the region. Locally this could include better signage, maps and waymarking to help encourage dispersal to CSCP trails, the RSPB facility and other CMRP attractions.

The visitor centre space is often at a premium with school and educational groups putting pressure on toilets, break-out space, and the capacity to support a quality food and drink offer. Potentially a remodelling and re-organisation of the building or additional space and the re-establishment of external toilets could create opportunity.

The consultation sought stakeholder views on the support and ancillary visitor services considered appropriate for the Castle Semple Visitor Centre.

Castle Semple Country Park – Visitor Pressures 2020-2022



Gateway location with intensification of use due to Covid/ Staycation and increase in outdoor recreation creating pressures on facilities with most acute pressures at 'gateway sites' with potential for conflict between visitors and residents.

1. Car Park capacity/congestion/irresponsible parking
2. Lack of toilet capacity / irresponsible toileting
3. Lack of changing capacity
4. Vehicular / Pedestrian conflicts
5. Watersport User conflicts
6. Cycle access issues
7. Erosion of grass areas / path edges
8. Littering

3.2.3 Castle Semple Country Park: Problems /Opportunities/ Issues /Challenges

The Problems, Opportunities, Issues and Challenges (POIC) that impact on the future of Castle Semple Country Park have been identified through public and stakeholder consultation along with ongoing discussions with park staff and local organisations:

Castle Semple County Park			
Problems	Opportunities	Issues	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Centre is an ageing facility needing major refurbishment to respond to 21st century needs. • Peak day visitor parking capacity creates congestion and restricts access. • Limited site capacity needs to address travel choice, develop capacity, and promote stronger dispersal. • Lack of basic facilities such as toilets, shelter and changing space. • Poor connections to facility and capacity to disperse and integrate town/village services within the visitor destination. • Avoiding a car-based 'predict & provide' planning approach that reinforces existing car based travel patterns and is ultimately unsustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Castle Semple as a sustainable gateway to CMRP creating a high-quality cluster of visitor facilities serviced by public transport and active travel. • Protect and enhance the special environmental qualities of the site and create more inclusive access to nature and experiences. • Invest in facilities offering scale and a mix of uses aligned with local capacity. • Develop the trail and walking/active travel routes creating a series of path-cycle routes barrier-free and meeting all skills, competencies and interests. • Extend and build on the resources to facilitate additional capacity for a range of visitor activity including nature activities, watersports and water-based leisure. • Develop public transport (rail and bus) connections that allow for public transport choice across Glasgow conurbation. • Develop a 'geography' curated around diverse visitor experiences integrating people, place, natural capital, and environment. • Look to align Castle Semple more strongly with local community needs and interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the need to improve facilities and address post-Covid demand for locally accessible recreation. • Sustainable management and protection of biodiversity in a designated environment of high value and sensitivity. • Need to address Climate Change and Net Zero commitments by reducing car dependency and extending choice, - facilitating modal shift. • Hospitality (café facilities) offer is very limited and requires upgrading or change in management. • Further assessments are required to establish site capacities and specific visitor user-requirements. • Proposals need to be sensitive to place and strongly anchored in place-making and aligned to local communities. • Need to build a concept/ vision and masterplan for the future through engagement with strong support across diverse user and interest groups. • Resources limited within ranger services • Multi-user activity can create conflicts associated with specific site user needs (water and land) and are not necessarily aligned to sustainable site management. • Operational management focus on visitor experience and quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing partner and funding support to deliver investment to upgrade the existing facility. • Securing partner and funding support to deliver investment to provide new facilities / attractions in rural location. • Identifying natural capital of the site and identifying sites with environmental capacity to accept sensitive built development. • Creating a quality masterplan to deliver a shared vision enabling phased delivery. • Building the partnerships with public/3rd sector/private funds to deliver the vision. • Securing early action and additional infrastructure investment for core visitor facilities represents an urgent need. • Developing the destination whilst promoting wider travel choice and targeting reduced car accessibility and reduced trip generation. • Delivering a high quality sustainable destination based on rural family-oriented attractions with meaningful modal shift targets. • Developing a strong Country Park USP based on a multi-activity centre.

3.3 Muirshiel Country Park

Muirshiel Country Park includes a small visitor centre that doubles as a centre for the ranger service. The purpose of the facility is to enjoy the estate setting of the former Muirshiel House and it is a gateway to the wider areas of CMRP. The site provides access to cycling including road and gravel routes and forms an access point to longer distance walks and routes.

Muirshiel Country Park fulfils a complimentary need to Castle Semple Country Park for less intensive, more individual, and small group exploration of the open countryside and wild areas of CMRP. It provides with its visitor centre a supported location for family and mixed capability groups to undertake hill walks and educational trails and explore the Muirshiel Estate.

The site has a number of important attributes that establish its 'gateway' qualities and create the opportunity for further development. These include:

- Central CMRP Location offering direct access to the centre of the Regional Park.
- Capacity to create a secondary hub and access point dispersing visitors and facilitating access to wild country/exploratory hill walks.
- Environment and place quality allowing visitors to access remote areas, get away from crowds and enjoy close contact with 'raw nature' and explore a heritage landscape.
- Established visitor infrastructure with a well-established Countryside Ranger Service

3.3.1 Growth in Visitor Numbers

Muirshiel Country Park has seen significant growth in visitor numbers over recent years, most notably since 2019 resulting from the impact of Covid. Levels of activity have remained consistently high with specific site pressures exacerbated throughout the summer peak periods.

Visitor counts undertaken by the Council have focussed on car counter data but this is anecdotally supported by the ranger service and open-mobile data (Strava). The statistics collated by the Council indicate:

- An increase in visitor numbers to Muirshiel Country Park between 2016 and 2021 jumping from 36,964 to 55,045 - a 48% increase over this period.
- A sustained level activity of between of 55,000 visitors between 2021 and 2023.

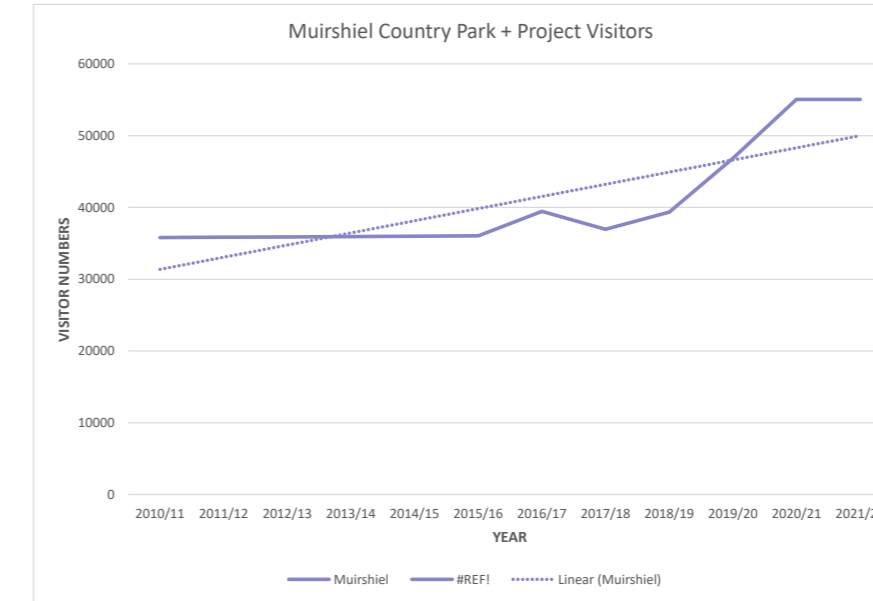


Figure 6: Muirshiel Country Park: Growth in visitor numbers 2010-2022 and projected numbers to 2025/26. The projected growth in visitor numbers is based on current post-covid levels of activity on site and the re-establishment of pre-covid annual growth in visitor numbers. The ranger service and levels of activity across the Country Park suggest these figures are probably conservative.

3.2.2 Challenges around Visitor Numbers

The main challenges associated with visitor use and the increase in visitor numbers include:

Sustaining Facilities & Growing Visitor Numbers

The Ranger Service operates from the visitor centre at Muirshiel Country Park and the dual use of visitor centre and ranger offices provides the operational base, sustains a presence, and maintains activity. Visitor numbers need to grow to sustain educational and public facilities at this site.

Building Condition

The existing building was built in the 1980's of timber construction and requires significant investment to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The building has suffered from severe water ingress through the roof and a major roof upgrade is required.

Road Access & Condition

Access to the visitor centre is by a C class rural road extending 5.0 km from the B876. The road has steep gradients, no footways and is a single-track road with passing places. For most of its length, the road is in good condition but limited by width and capacity.

The site access road has poor facilities for walkers and cyclists using the route. Road safety and the encouragement of active travel present significant challenges.

Muirshiel Country Park – Visitor Pressures 2020-2022

Gateway location with intensification of use due to Covid/ Staycation and increase in outdoor recreation creating pressures on facilities with most acute pressures at 'gateway sites' with potential for conflict between visitors and residents.

1. Single track road capacity
2. Vehicular / Pedestrian conflicts on approach road
3. Cycle access issues
4. Lack of waymarking /
5. Path erosion / Land management
6. Littering



3.2.3 Muirshiel Country Park: Problems /Opportunities / Issues /Challenges

Problems / Opportunities / Issues and Challenges (POIC Appraisal) that impact on the future of Muirshiel Country Park have been identified through public and stakeholder consultation along with ongoing discussions with park staff and local organisations:

Muirshiel County Park			
<p>Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Centre is an ageing facility requiring investment (refurbishment/ renewal) to maintain functionality. • Location is remote from accessible public transport and viable active travel routes and is therefore car dependent. • Access road is 5km single track road with limited capacity. • Single track road with locally steep gradients with no footway or cycleway provision. • Visitor Centre offers limited appeal as a destination providing a primary service centre for ranger services. E.g., a functional facility. • MCP purpose and future role within CMRP not clearly defined limiting clarity around future investment. • MCP is a staging point for local/wider walks/cycling but offers very limited facilities and tracks/routes require investment. • Facilities are 7.5km from Lochwinnoch and 9.0km from the railway station accessed by a single-track road. 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote and rural estate environment with extensive opportunities to develop walks and trails and make path connections to local points of interest. • Develop scenic trails and high moor walking/active travel routes linked to circular local routes within MCP. • Develop cycle routes. • Develop trail hub. • Develop as a low intensity, nature/wild outdoors exploratory environment based on place/open moorland/heritage visitor experiences. • Protect and enhance the special environmental qualities of the site and create more inclusive access to nature and experiences. • Identify how to capitalise on this experience so close to Glasgow beside central Scotland's only 'wildland' • Demonstration/education site for green energy using peatland, hydro, solar etc. 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of MCP Visitor Centre role if stronger facilities developed at Castle Semple. • Café facilities opening seasonally requiring greater footfall to be sustainable. • Forest felling programme may involve disruption . due to working operations. • MCP offers local facilities/access but not significantly better/ differentiated from other country/rural locations and facilities • Need to address Climate Change and Net Zero commitments in promoting a site where access is primarily by car. 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing partner and funding support to deliver investment to upgrade the existing facility. • Defining a purpose and need for a location that promotes and supports outdoor activity. • Access challenges for active travel (walking and cycling) given routes from other centres are road based with significant opportunity for road user conflict. • Lack of public transport options.



RSPB Boardwalk completed initial phases.

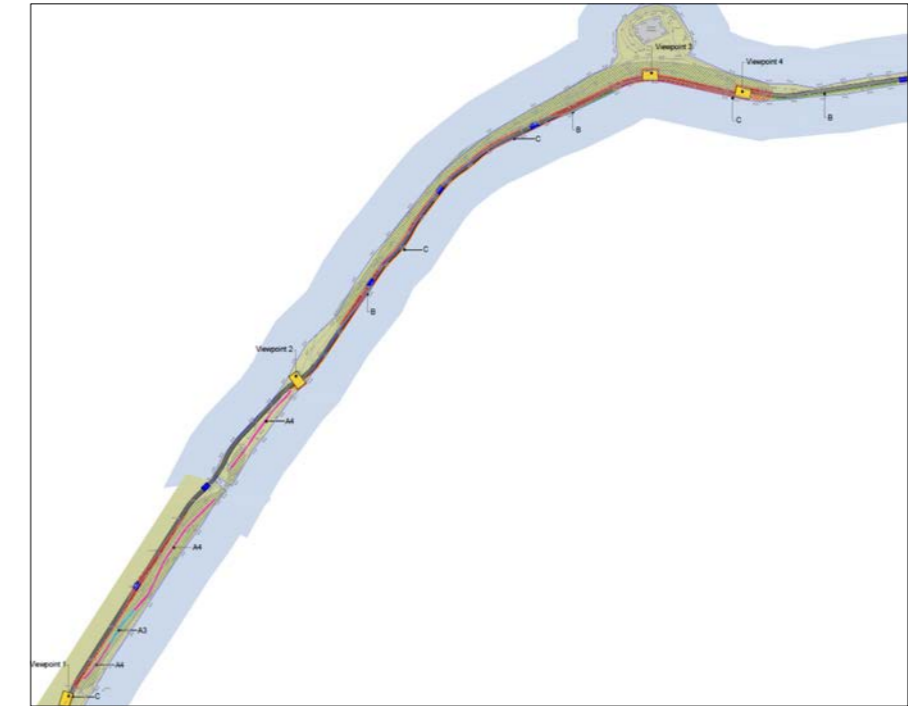
3.3 Loch Aird Boardwalk

RSPB / Renfrewshire Council / VisitScotland / National Lottery Heritage Fund.

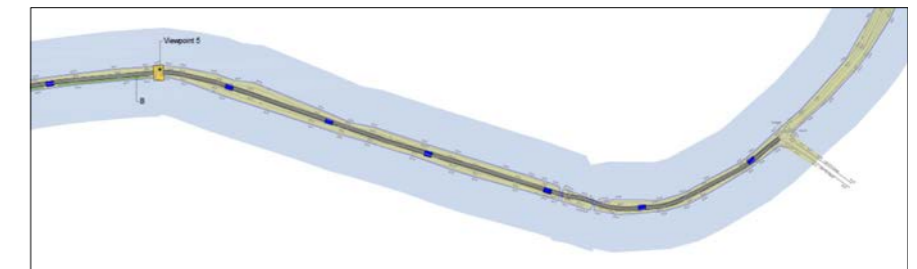
RSPB Lochwinnoch have recently completed the construction of a new 400m boardwalk with funding support from VisitScotland's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, as part of the Garnock Connections landscape partnership scheme.

The new boardwalk closes 400m of the 870m gap in a circular route around the Aird Meadow Loch before ending at a viewpoint beside the Peel Tower. It provides level and safe access to a previously inaccessible part of the nature reserve, ensuring more people can enjoy immersing themselves in the local wildlife and the beautiful surroundings, without impacting on the natural biodiversity.

The new route will also help staff and volunteers manage the site for the benefit of visitors and wildlife, giving easy access to areas that were previously hard to reach and could be susceptible to anti-social behaviour. The final phase of the wider boardwalk development is in early development stages.



Boardwalk West Section - General Arrangement



Boardwalk North Section - General Arrangement



3.4 Conclusion to Developing the Country Park 'Gateway' Facilities

- Castle Sempole and Muirshiel Country Parks will continue to secure high visitor numbers and the level of demand for high quality, visitor serviced, and publicly accessible outdoor recreation destinations will continue to grow.
- Castle Sempole and Muirshiel Country Parks require investment and a clear strategy for developing their facilities, recreational, leisure capacity and educational and ranger services.
- Castle Sempole Country Park has the potential to offer the strongest 'gateway' to the Regional Park.
- The investment focus should be Castle Sempole Country Park which has the capacity to significant expand and develop as a major Sub-National/Regional recreational facility in a well-connected location with strong sustainable travel choices, active local club level organisations and the connections to the nearby RSPB Lochwinnoch.
- Renfrewshire's Country Parks could make a significant additional contribution to rural economic growth, building stronger links to rural and activity tourism and place-based regeneration of the connected villages of Lochwinnoch, Howwood and Kilbarchan.

Castle Sempole Country Park

- Gateway to Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park
- All-family Facility

Castle Sempole Country Park
What are the best elements of the Country Park?

Country Park
What investment would you like to see in the Country Park?

Country Park
How can the Country Park be improved?

Country Park
How important are Visitor Facilities and toilets?

Country Park
How best can we become more sustainable?

Priorities for Investment:
• Your thoughts and ideas for developing the country park.

Country Park
The Country Park is a great asset. How can it be improved and developed?

Creating a regional tourism destination

New Visitor Hub

- Education & Ecological
- All-family Facility

New Visitor Hub
Castle Sempole will need investment to maintain facilities for the future?

New Visitor Hub
Country Parks are for all. What additional facilities are required?

New Visitor Hub
In the Short-Term new toilet facilities are a priority?

New Visitor Hub
Creating a new Café / Education and Ecological Centre could add to the Parks appeal?

Visitor Hub
Parking space is limited so encouraging walking, cycling and public transport is important?

Priorities for Investment:
• How do we create a stronger destination whilst supporting regeneration of local centres & villages?

New Visitor Hub
A New Visitor Hub could add new facilities and allow more flexible use of the existing Centre?

Creating a regional tourism destination



04

Strategic Plan

4.1 Developing the Strategic Vision

The vision and aspiration for Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks is to build a regional tourism and visitor destination meeting a broad range of visitor needs that provides a key gateway into the wider Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.

Castle Semple will create a multi-centred, multi-activity destination; combining activities operated and managed by Renfrewshire Council, supported by RSPB and where appropriate commercial and private operators (café-restaurant, bike hub, visitor services etc.) as well as providing the base for Countryside Ranger Services with a focus on visitor support, land and environmental management and access & well-being.

As a primary Regional Park gateway, the Castle Semple Country Park and Visitor Centre will focus on sustainable visitor use, meeting the diverse needs of its visitors in a manner that celebrates the special qualities of place and where all users can enjoy active leisure, contact with nature, participate in, or watch water-based activities and to share experiences in a quality outdoor environment.

Key Aims

Developing Castle Semple as a Visitor Gateway

- Develop Castle Semple Country Park as the primary 'gateway' to CMRP in Renfrewshire.
- Invest and develop a strong and diverse range of attractions and facilities based on a combination of active recreation and leisure including watersports, walks & trails, environmental exploration and education, health and well-being.
- Promote the Country Park a key destination hub and place of orientation for facilities both within CMRP and in the wider community i.e., local villages and other local attractions.

Creating a Multi-Centred Destination

- Country Park Regional Centre
 - New "Crannog style"¹ visitor service Hub supporting additional visitor facilities including Café/Restaurant Facility and local orientation and information.
 - Education and wildlife hides/facilities.
 - Semple Trail extension, boardwalks, and connections with RSPB.
 - Cycle hub and cycle trails linked to NCR7.
 - Ancillary visitor retail e.g. crafts, arts, natural growing.
 - Walks for well being
- Regional Watersports and Activity Centre
 - Watersports for All – Specialist Training and 'Can U Experience'
 - Community Clubs e.g., Sailing, Rowing, Windsurfing, SUP Clubs.
 - Independent water sports and leisure e.g., for Kayaks, Canoes and SUPs.
- Major Regional Innovative Play Facility
 - Innovative & Natural Play & Exploration
- RSPB Nature Reserve
 - Connecting walkways to RSPB Centre
 - Boardwalk / Hides / Interpretation

¹ A 'Crannog' is a traditional water-edge building.

Enabling additional facilities within the Country Park and/or Regional Park:

- Public transport and active travel connections.
- Strong village links and public realm connections.
- Regional trails, long-distance and circular cycleways.
- Other attractions and facilities (CMRP) e.g., Greenock Cut, Lunderston Bay, Lochshore Kilbirnie.
- Destination accommodation.
 - Visitor accommodation.
 - Camping centre.
 - Motorhome Facility.
- Local business growth.
 - Hospitality and accommodation.
 - Local retail / tourism related business.
 - Regional BMX / biking centre (e. g. within local area benefiting from cycle path network).
 - Bike & Cycle Hub.
 - Bike Pump/BMX.
 - Gravel Trax.
- Lochside fishing stations
- Events e.g.
 - Cycle Arts Festival
 - Watersports events (building on current programme).
 - Model boating / other
 - 'Your Castle Semple' - Environmental open day



4.2 Developing a Project Based Strategy

A medium to long term strategy or plan will be required to advance the development of the core facilities at Castle Semple Visitor Centre within the wider Castle Semple Country Park. An initial presentation to CMRP Liaison Group (Feb 2023) highlighted:

- Strong local member support for the concept of re-investment and development at Castle Semple Country Park.
- The need to positively plan for the future, develop a clear vision and set an ambition aligned with the Tourism Action Plan and development of the rural economy.
- A recognition that projects of this scale and nature will require external funding and in all likelihood be developed in phases based on successful funding awards.

Development of the concept should seek to establish a broad consensus of support across all stakeholders, identify the local priorities and needs and build through engagement a plan that will allow short, medium and longer-term priorities to be identified and advanced.

Funding streams and opportunities to bid for external funding often emerge with very tight timescales. Recent examples include Levelling up Funds, Growth Deals, Lottery Funding Programmes and funds available through the Tourism Infrastructure Funds via VisitScotland and the Scottish Government. A strategy is required to secure short-, medium- and long-term funding.

Discussion with officers during the development of the strategy focussed on the need for a review of existing funding arrangements at Castle Semple and the urgent need for investment in the built facilities that have been identified as approaching the end of their design life.

4.2.1 Addressing Investment Options

Investment & Development Strategy for Castle Semple Country Park (CP)		
Level of Intervention		
Option 1 Existing Capital Programme – ‘Make Do & Mend’	Option 2 New investment and upgrading of Existing Facilities	Option 3 Major Investment Programme Support by Initial Engagement Preferred Strategy
Existing Capital Programme	Programme for full facility upgrade	Programme for re-development
Bid for external support funding on a project by project basis	Bid for external support funding on a project by project basis	Major bid programme and/or co-funding with partners
CAPEX Investment requirement £0.5m/annum	CAPEX Investment requirement £21-£4 m/annum over 3-5years	CAPEX Investment requirement £15-£25m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do minimum. • Seek to manage issues. • Address core deficiencies • Adopt measures to mitigate impacts. • Retain existing operations. • Promote other sites / locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on short term needs • Respond to issues as issues arise. • Consult with wider stakeholder groups. • Develop/trial short-term measures. • Improve on-site reactive management. • Build more car parking. • Retain existing operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create forward looking vision & strategy. • Address short/medium/longer term needs. • Identify ‘Early Actions’ to address pressures. • Prioritise investment and seek external funding / funding bid opportunities. • Seek partner/stakeholder support. • Develop Destination Development Plan / • Develop Visitor Management Plan. • Identify opportunities for sustainable outdoor recreation and tourism development. • Develop a place-based masterplan linked to area regeneration and place-making. • Engage with stakeholders/ communities. • Review operational Management.

Investment & Development Strategy Park Facilities		
Option 1 Existing CP Gateways	Option 2 Hierarchy of CP Gateways Support by Initial Engagement	Option 3 Single Destination Gateway Preferred Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote all CP Gateway sites. Invest at each of the visitor centres. Develop MCP & CSCP visitor centres. Invest in public transport connectivity. 	Develop a strategic hierarchy of CP 'Gateways'. Aligned with environmental capacity. Define hierarchy linked to investment plan. Inclusive, barrier free, family focussed. Primary CP Gateway destinations to offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity for high level visitor use. Multiple attraction/facility cluster. Public transport connectivity. Connections to NCR and active travel network. Toilets / changing Commercial hospitality / support services Parking + EV charging Strong town / village links Ranger / educational / training services Play areas / facilities. Secondary CP Gateway destinations to offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ranger services Toilets / changing 	Review and define new Country Park Strategy. Focus facilities within single 'Destination'. Destination supports regional tourism. Develop as a multi-partnered investment. Public / Private /Third Sector operators Destination development to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial /public service facilities Commercial leisure/hospitality Clubs and commercial leisure Third Sector Multiple attractions / facilities Accommodation (chalet) Hospitality (café/restaurant) Public transport connectivity Public sector facilities focussed on ranger services / path networks / environmental management.

4.2.1 Developing a Masterplan

The Castle Semple Country Park Strategic Plan is being advanced as a 'Visioning Project' to assess levels of strategic support within Renfrewshire Council to commit to a fully transformational project for Castle Semple Country Park as the 'gateway- centrepiece' to the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park in Renfrewshire.

The preferred strategy for Castle Semple Country Park is to develop a major investment programme (Option 3 - see above) to substantially upgrade and expand the facilities as a core element of Renfrewshire's Tourism Action Plan. The investment would involve:

- Development of a detailed Masterplan
- Preparation of a costed Investment Plan and Business Case
- Commitment to a phased Investment Programme
- Investment of £15-£25 million over a 5-15 year period (dependent on funding attained)

A decision to re-invest in Castle Semple would reflect similar commitments by public authorities in countryside assets and country parks. Benchmark examples of masterplanned proposals for countryside recreation project investment in Scotland include:

- Falkirk Helix (Falkirk Council/Living Landmark Programme) £40m
- Strathclyde Park (North Lanarkshire Council) £20m
- Irvine Great Harbour (North Ayrshire Council / AGD) £14m
- Dams to Darnley (East Renfrewshire Council) £20m
- Seven Lochs (Glasgow City & North Lanarkshire Councils) £16m
- Pollok Country Park Stables & Courtyard (Glasgow city/LUF) £13m

Developing the project will require wider engagement and the development of a masterplan with clear project strategy based around the delivery of national, regional and local outcomes supported by a clear Business Case and a promotion and marketing strategy. Importantly the masterplan will need to align with the core policy and planning strategies, including:

- Renfrewshire's Tourism Action Plan
- Renfrewshire's Economic Development Strategy
- Local Development Plan
- Place Shaping Strategy & Local Place Plans
- Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (i.e., Section 5 of this Plan)

The masterplan will need to complete a detailed user need, space, facilities and condition review of the core assets of the Country Park including detail of ownerships, leases, designations etc. Proposals have been advanced for extensions and redevelopment of buildings associated with both the Castle Semple Visitor Centre (Simpson Brown, 2020) and Rowing Club.

The masterplan should seek to develop a detailed understanding of current and future needs based on the capacity of the Castle Semple Visitor Centre, Castle Semple Loch and existing infrastructure.

The Castle Semple Visitor Centre site is constrained, and options should be explored around developing a 'multi-centred visitor park campus' model that provides facilities within a series of specialist hubs connected by active travel walkways and boardwalks that build on the special; qualities of place and collectively create a strong integrated visitor destination.

An initial exploration of ideas has focussed on the existing facilities and visitor centre site. The site is constrained in scale (long narrow site defined by former railway (NCR7) and Castle Semple Loch) and with relatively poor road access. The opportunity within a multi-centred visitor destination should seek to develop:

- The existing watersports visitor centre to better accommodate its activity role alongside the existing local clubs and provide for independent day visitors looking to participate in watersports. This may mean reorganisation of space to meet educational, changing and group activities (including additional provision of toilets).
- A new visitor centre – potentially on the model of a ‘Crannog’ providing visitor hospitality (café, retail, restaurant, orientation and viewpoints) at the south-west corner of Castle Semple Loch (closer to the Lochwinnoch Public Park). This would be connected by paths and/or boardwalk to Lochwinnoch Public Park, the Watersports Visitor Centre, the RSPB Centre and include for new public car parking on Lochlip Road. Boardwalk connections to Loch Aird circular walkway (RSPB) will extend the opportunity for contact with nature and connect facilities across the Castle Semple Country Park. The review should also consider the future role and contribution of the Lochwinnoch Community Annexe Building and the further development of community space.
- A high-quality new Play Facility that builds on the existing facility within Lochwinnoch Public Park offering innovative exploratory play potentially themed around wildlife, birds and/or local ecology supporting the wider Country Park offer as a full-day visitor destination.

- A network of paths / boardwalk and walkways that build on the Semple Trail initiative creating opportunities to offer closer contact with nature, water-margins and wetland ecology and build on the RSPB Boardwalk with a series of circular exploratory routes connecting all visitor destinations.
- Provision of a new arrival, access, and parking close to the A760 / Lochlip Road with new visitor parking linked to path/cycle network. The additional parking will take pressure off the existing parking and create the main arrival point with associated visitor facility linked to the New Visitor Centre / Crannog closer to the Lochwinnoch Station supporting sustainable travel choices.
- Countryside Ranger Services investment and Voluntary Group support that provides ranger voluntary sector support services (digital / interactive interpretation, info-point / QR Codes or App, educational walks, summer season guided walks and access to hides) alongside site environmental management and measures to support environmental designations and protection and enhancement of biodiversity and nature restoration.

The masterplan should also ensure it is closely aligned to Renfrewshire’s Regeneration and Place-Shaping Strategy and support ‘Just Transition’ to Net Zero and Climate Change:

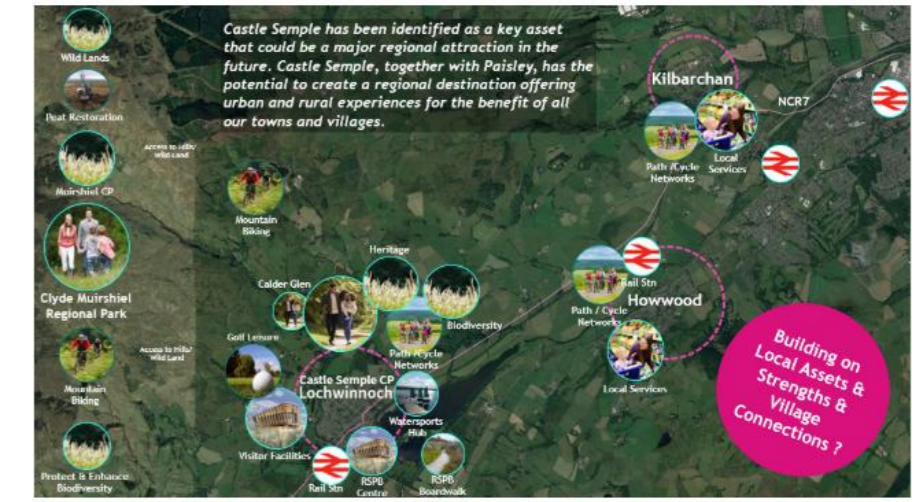
- The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan supports investment which creates strong communities and attractive places within Renfrewshire and is closely aligned to a place-making and place-shaping programme linked to key sector growth. The focus is on regeneration and enhancing existing places.
- Rural and village regeneration (predominantly Lochwinnoch, Howwood and Kilbarchan – see plan) will seek to promote multi-use activities and functionality within local village centres that can help to sustain local business activity and services. These settlements are serviced by the Paisley-Ayr rail line with stations at Lochwinnoch and Howwood and provide a range of hospitality and service support for recreation and outdoor leisure, and tourism.
- Destination development can support Renfrewshire’s rural settlements and strengthen local village services, 20-minute neighbourhoods, and small business. Enterprise activity can be developed around planning for sustainable tourism which supports and promotes:
 - Stronger public transport services and connections and the promotion of public transport to reduce car dependency.
 - Increase of local spending (goods and services) within centres and associated visitor facilities creating local employment and economic activity.
 - Developing strong connections and active travel routes between settlements and points of visitor arrival, gateways, facilities, national cycle routes, public transport interchanges and destinations.
 - Protecting environmental assets and managing destinations to enhance environmental capacity and biodiversity.



05 Strategic Infrastructure Plan

5.1 Programme of Investment & Development
 Renfrewshire Council are keen for the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP) for Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks to create a clear framework for visitor infrastructure development. The STIDP will help to support future application(s) to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) operated by Visitscotland.

This Plan (STIDP) seeks to address short term needs and the priorities associated with visitor pressures on the current facilities and resources. The plan also aligns with the ambitions to develop outdoor recreation, environment education and sports and leisure facilities within the Country Parks to deliver on the Council's commitments to community health and well-being, tourism, and further development of the rural economy in line with the adopted Development Plan policies.



5.2 Developing a Phased Investment Plan

- **Short Term Needs – seeking funding support from RTIF**
Addressing the challenges of current visitor pressures
Renfrewshire Council recognise the need for short -term investment to address unsustainable visitor pressures at Castle Semple. Immediate short-term actions are relating to:
 - visitor management.
 - addressing negative impacts on the visitor experience.
 - addressing capacity of the basic tourism infrastructure (toilets/ paths/safe movement).
 - promoting easier access by sustainable travel modes and support for active travel.
- **Medium Term Future**
Building the infrastructure for Castle Semple gateway
Renfrewshire Council have been working to develop early 'visioning and concept work' advanced by the Regeneration and Place Team. Ideas and concepts formed part of the Next Stage Community & Stakeholder Engagement which took place late February 2023. Medium term actions to develop:
 - A detailed masterplan for the future development of Castle Semple Country Park.
 - Business case and submissions to support external funding.
 - Implementation of initial phases of investment.

- **Longer Term Future**
Develop the destination and extend place-making
Destination development will allow wider partnership delivery; working closely with a range of tourism operators / providers with the view of extending the half-day / day visitor activity at Castle Semple Country Park to longer-term breaks with more extensive co-located offers (additional attractions, facilities and activities); local accommodation (hotels, chalets, Airbnb, Rural B&B); extending the visitor catchment; developing links to Renfrewshire's food and drink sectors; regional and local events and experiences.

5.3 Consultation & Engagement

The STIDP has involved a joint working group engaging external stakeholders along with Council services (including the Place and Regeneration, Park and Ranger services and Environment and Infrastructure teams). Discussion and collaboration have centred on the needs of Castle Semple in terms of visitors, operational management, measures to support net zero and the promotion of active and sustainable travel choices.

Renfrewshire Council are very aware that the concept needs to engage and build support across a diverse range of stakeholders. Early indications have confirmed support for short term project initiatives (RTIF applications) and outlined medium term ideas for further development of Castle Semple as a primary gateway facility for the Regional Park.

Consultation Events & Stakeholder Group Presentations

The broad concepts and draft proposals have been subject to consultation with stakeholder groups through presentations and events. These have included:

- Clyde Muirshiel Liaison Group. Member and cross departmental officer group with responsibility for coordination of Renfrewshire Council's management of CMRP within Renfrewshire.
- The Villages Local Partnership is a formally constituted group of seven local Community Councils (Lochwinnoch, Howwood, Kilbarchan, Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Elderslie, Houston). The group meets periodically to coordinate activity, share knowledge around new initiatives and programmes and coordinate spending supported through grant funding from Renfrewshire Council. Castle Semple proposals were presented to this group.
- Stakeholder & Public Consultation Event hosted at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre 23rd February 2023 attended by 60-80 stakeholders, residents and park users. Consultees completed questionnaires and indicated priorities / preferences at the event and on-line.



Consultation On-line with Supporting Questionnaire Survey

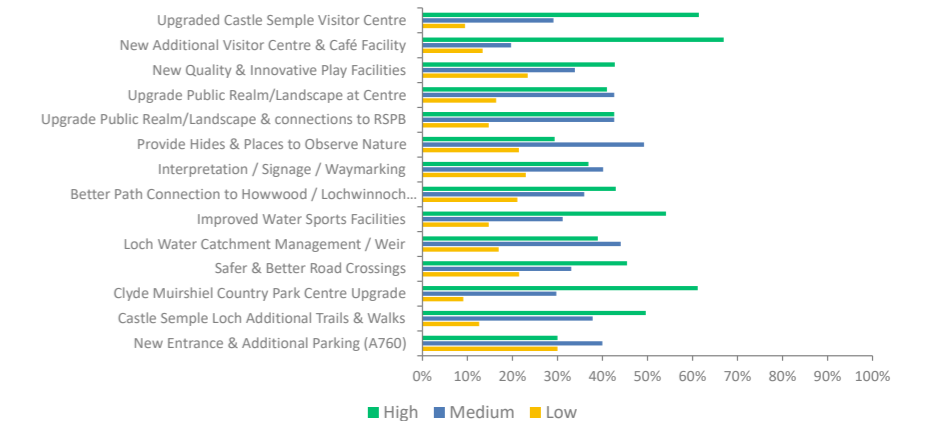
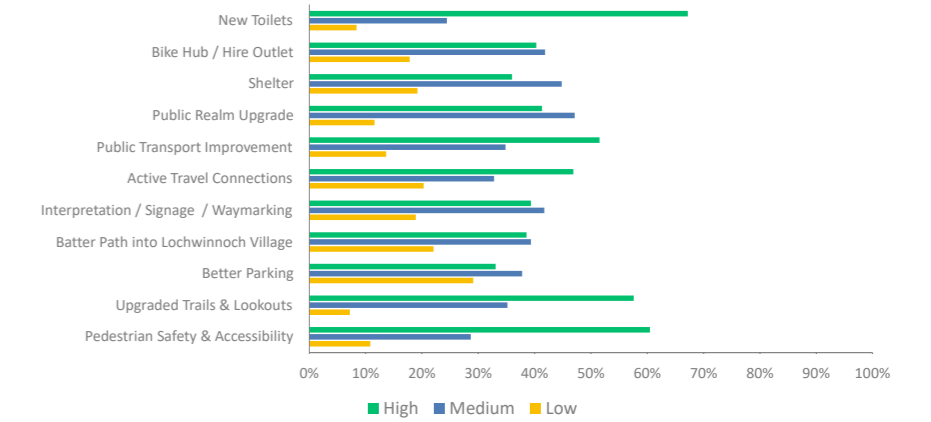
- Virtual Engagement (On-line Consultation - available on-line on computers, digital devices and phones) provides a virtual 'Consultation Room' duplicating presentation materials used for other events but undertaken to make the consultation more inclusive and seek responses and feedback from individuals and groups unable to attend events.
- The on-line consultation has been viewed 614 times with over 136 questionnaires completed on-line. On-line consultation has proved to be very successful in extending engagement and inviting comment from within community organisations, clubs and wider user groups and the general public.
- The On-line Questionnaire provided both qualitative and quantitative feedback through a standard suite of questions around project priorities, user needs and views on the adequacy or otherwise of the existing facilities. The main priority projects supported were:

High Priority Short-Term Projects

1.	New Toilets	67.18%
2.	Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility	60.47%
3.	Upgraded Trails & lookouts	57.6%

High Priority Medium / Longer Term Projects

1.	New Additional Visitor Centre & Café Facility	66.93%
2.	Upgraded Castle Semple Visitor Centre	61.42%
3.	Muirshiel Country Park Centre Upgrade	61.16%





5.4 Delivering a Sustainable Short-Term Future Upgrading facilities to meet current demands at Castle Semples Visitor Centre

Castle Semples is an aging facility developed in the 1980's to meet needs that have changed over the past 40 years and it now requires to be re-positioned to meet the needs of the 21st century. Promoting independent visitor uses, outdoor leisure and recreational activity, exploration and contact with the natural environment (with ready access based on sustainable travel choices) are all areas to be advanced.

The short-term focus of the work at Castle Semples has been to address challenges of managing visitor numbers and expectations at a 'gateway site' that has witnessed a 24% (2018-2019) increase in visitor numbers on a site with ageing infrastructure and limited capacity. Pressures arising through increased visitor numbers have been further exacerbated by the covid-19 pandemic.

Castle Semples Country Park is a large site with a good capacity for visitor dispersal and exploration. Adjacent facilities include the neighbouring RSPB Lochwinnoch reserve. Short term needs are focussed on creating additional capacity to better meet the needs of the current visitor numbers and user groups.

"hunger for outdoor activities and physical adventures that allow people to reconnect with nature, help them stay fit, and provide them with a sense of freedom"
VisitScotland Insights

Issues arising during covid / post-covid at Castle Semples Country Park (impacting on the visitor experience, access and capacity) include:

- Level of on-site parking with capacity unable to address demand during peak periods weekends for most of the summer season compounded by visitor's reluctance to make use of public transport.
- Visitor management and pedestrian / cyclist safety - created through uncontrolled, irresponsible and illegal parking, exacerbated by a lack of definition of parking areas and a lack of enforcement.
- Inadequate signage and waymarking to encourage/support stronger visitor dispersal at primary arrival points (i.e., lack of dispersal and not capitalising on existing infrastructure e.g., paths, lookoوترies and viewpoints).
- Inadequate visitor destination elements which would support greater intensity of use e.g., seating, shelter for watersports, changing facilities, improved food and beverage offer, litter- recycling bins, local paths connections and appropriate information.
- Lack of toilet provision (other than in the main visitor centre building which has limited opening hours).
- Lack of signage and legible connections to encourage sustainable travel choices e.g., public transport, rail, bus, and active travel (to reduce pressure on car parks).
- Poor access and mobility issues at the Lochwinnoch train station for visitors with access needs e.g., family groups with prams, cyclists' people with disabilities etc.
- Inadequate cycle route information and cycle parking (and potentially charging points) to offer a range of circular and connected leisure and exploratory routes to the NCR7 and NCR75.

A Steering Group Workshop and a Stakeholder Consultation Event has identified a long list of improvements that would strengthen sustainable visitor activity and support the long-term ambitions for Castle Semple Country Park.

The review of short-term needs identified the scope of action, order of cost and priority. The initial assessment indicated that immediate short-term needs would require an investment of between £0.9 and £1.2m to meet site/visitor requirements for 2024 – 2026. Concurrently, Renfrewshire Council will look to advance through a masterplan process the medium-term investment plans.

Vision: Renfrewshire Outdoor Leisure Destination

Developing the Key Ideas & Concepts Making Castle Semple a 'Special Place'

Ideas are at an 'early stage of thinking' and are looking to identify the areas of opportunity that can inform a future vision. Key initial ideas:

Castle Semple Country Park

- Create a Hub supporting the Regional Park with diverse attractions and trails
- Develop a new Visitor Centre creating a series of 'hubs' and activity centres
- Extend and improve the trails and walkway/seating areas

Regional Watersports Facility

- Build on and extend Castle Semple as a Regional Centre for Watersports for All
- Improve water access and shoreside facilities

Loch & Nature Reserve

- Link up with RSPB and create a Circular Semple Loch Walk / Boardwalk
- Develop a network of trails, viewpoints and bird / wildlife hides

New Visitor Hub

- Create a Hub for visitors with facilities (café / toilets/ educational space)
- Improve pedestrian & cycle access, connections to station and parking
- Provide a regional high quality adventure / innovative play facility

Early engagement is looking to start a conversation about future investment.

Ideas to improve place quality

Creating a regional tourism destination

Strategy: Short / Medium / Long Term

Investment planning for Castle Semple Plan includes Short / Medium / Longer Term Elements

Castle Semple needs investment. Delivering a vision for larger scale projects will take time and will require external funding. In the Short-Term, investment is required to maintain the facilities and enhance their capacity. The investment plan for Castle Semple therefore includes the following elements:

Short Term Programme (1-2 Years)

- Secure funding for investment in 2023 / 2024 from RTIF/Council
- Funding Bid to Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) operated by VisitScotland
- Invest in new toilets/ better path connections / waymarking- eligible items under RTIF

Medium-Longer Term Programme (3-10 Years)

- Secure funding for investment in 2025/ 2028 from National Grant Award (s)
- Bid to Scottish & UK National Programmes
- Regeneration / place-making / tourism funding to support Regional Tourism Strategy

Castle Semple Country Park is a major asset. Many of the facilities are 20-30 years old and require re-investment. The park has opportunity to develop as a 'gateway' to Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and create a active sport & recreational hub taking advantage of its sustainable travel connections.

Investing in facilities to create a quality experience for all.

Creating a regional tourism destination

5.5 Priority Action Plan

The priorities within the Short -Term needs focussed strongly on access, safe mobility and connections to sustainable travel choices as well as the provision of adequate toilets on the site. Three 'high' priority projects were identified:

Priority 1: New Toilet Facilities

Demolish the no longer fit for purpose toilet block. Provide a new facility on the existing site. Design to improve accessibility and provide a small changing area for independent watersports users and/or bike hire hub plus additional cycle parking. The Council would likely seek a design grant (RTIF) for development of the toilet facility.

Priority 2 Railway Bridge Safe Movement & Connections

Address pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular conflicts at the railway bridge (Church St/Lochlip Road) with new junction markings (white lining/hazard marking/cycle markings to road and cycleway plus sightline improvements.

Priority 3 Public Transport Connections - (CS-Lochwinnoch Stn.)

Improve legibility ease of connections and provide appropriate signage for Lochwinnoch Rail Station, RSPB, and Castle Semple with information on including, for example, active travel trails, Castle Semple Loch, Barr Loch and CMRP. Amend/Improve existing crossing, white road markings and provision of safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.

5.6 Delivering a Sustainable Short-Term Future Upgrading facilities to meet current demands at Muirshiel Visitor Centre

Muirshiel Visitor Centre is an aging facility developed in the 1980's and essentially providing a hybrid facility as a ranger services building and visitor centre. The centre helps to promote independent visitor uses, outdoor leisure, recreational activity, exploration and contact with the natural environment as well as access to the wilder areas of CMRP.

The short-term focus of the work at Muirshiel Visitor Centre needs to support existing facilities and ensure these are fit for purpose as well as encouraging dispersal of visitors across the Regional Park from the Castle Semple Primary Gateway.

The site assessment, discussion and observations along with recorded comments on site facilities produced a series of issues and concerns that need to be addressed. The main issues are:

- Building works to improve energy efficiency of the building and complete roof/fabric repairs to ensure building is fully wind/watertight and fit for use. Currently the building suffers from significant water ingress.
- Inadequate signage and waymarking of accessible hill walks, and routes.
- Amenity enhancement to the immediate Visitor Site.
- Path surfaces and path connections /gates

Ref	Draft Project	Priority	Order of Cost	RC and Others	RTIF	Scope/Description
01	Demolish Toilet Block Provide New Toilets	High	£0.2-£0.30m	£55k	£220k	Demolish condemned Toilet Block. Provide new facility for all users. Design to improve accessibility and small changing and/or shower area for independent watersports users plus additional Bike Hire Hub / Flexible Outlet Space to support bike hire / cycle activity and NCR7.
02	Improvements External Public Realm	High	£0.15-£0.2m	£30k	£120k	Place and visitor infrastructure public realm improvements to external environment to CS Centre to improve capacity, accessibility and circulation and improve amenity and DDA inclusive access/mobility. Potentially to include boardwalk/pontoon to waterfrontage.
06	Develop Trails & Boardwalk Initiatives	High	£0.25-£0.35m	£60k	£240k	Strengthen the 'trails initiative' with an innovative educational trail/walkway and viewing hubs connecting Castle Semple more legibly to other attractions & sister facilities (Parkhill Wood /RSPB). Compliments and links RSPB Boardwalk.
07	Public Transport Access (CS-Lochwinnoch Stn.)	High	£0.1m	£20k	£80k	Improve legibility ease of connections and provide signage Lochwinnoch Rail Station/ RSPB/Castle Semple with signage and information on Active Travel trails / Castle Semple Loch and CMRP. White lining and improve safe crossing for ped/cyclists.
09	Active Travel Connections	High	£0.1-0.2m	£20	£80k	Improve grading and connections to NCR7 and Active Travel Routes / Trails to make dispersal of visitors and connections easier. Connections to RSPB Boardwalk and connections to Lochwinnoch /Howwood rail stations.
10	Way-Marking from Visitor Arrival Points	High	£0.1-0.2m	£20k	£80k	Upgrade the family of way-marking signs to develop clearer messaging connecting Castle Semple with Lochwinnoch/ Howwood/Kilbarchan and inviting dispersal of visitors supporting peak capacity/facilitating further exploration of local place assets.
12	Railway Bridge (Ped/Cycle) Safe Movement/Capacity	High	£0.05m	£10k	£40k	Address pedestrian/ cycle and vehicular conflicts at the Railway Bridge (Church St/Lochlip Road) with new junction markings (white lining/hazard marking/cycle markings to road & cycleway plus sightline improvements
15	Muirshiel Visitor Centre	High	£0.1-£0.2m	£30k	£120k	Provision of play within site. Small play facility to meet needs of children/ younger audiences providing barrier free/inclusive play and a short family oriented short circular walk from Visitor Centre.
Totals				£245k	£980k	
Summary Total				£245k	£980k	Short Term Priority Investment £1,075,000 over 2 years
% Contributions				20%	80%	
TOTAL Phase 1 Investment						£1,225,000

Short Term Project Priorities addressing acute visitor pressures within Castle Semple Country Park / Muirshiel Country Park

5.7 RTIF Application – Short-term Early Action Priorities

The priority items are all considered eligible items under the VisitScotland Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) that aims to support collaborative projects with a focus on improving rural visitor experience that are facing pressure on their infrastructure and communities because of visitor numbers and pressure points.

5.8 Medium Term Future Building the infrastructure for Castle Semple Gateway

Renfrewshire Council has medium and longer-term ambitions for Castle Semple Country Park.

Through this STIDP, the Council has sought to identify funding (RTIF) for the short term programme (see short term priorities in table above). The stakeholder engagement activity undertaken to prepare the STIDP was also used as a platform to develop a medium/longer term a Project Prospectus to define a development and investment programme for the period 2025-2035.

As previously noted, Castle Semple Country Park is identified within the emerging Regional Tourism Strategy and as a regionally important community and recreational asset. It is considered likely that Castle Semple will emerge as a major programme initiative to support regional tourism growth, rural diversification and village place-making with strong tourism, economic and community outcomes.

The engagement has identified strong support for further development of the Country Park, with stakeholders looking to build on the key strengths of the existing visitor centre and recreational, educational and environmental assets. Stakeholder feedback has supported concept ideas for re-investment in facilities and the development concept of Castle Semple as a Regional Park Gateway.



Developing a Project Prospectus

In developing a Project Prospectus for Castle Semple Country Park, the Council will be seeking to develop initial concept ideas that, subject to further review and approvals, could set a brief for a full masterplanning and business case exercise for the Country Park 2025-2035. Development proposals would be subject to external support funding with an anticipation Castle Semple could be a project for future national funding submissions.

Initial ideas informally reviewed through the consultation process are still at concept stage, however, the early ideas suggested with evidence of support are:

- Promoting a multi-centred Country Park.
- Developing active recreation and watersports within the visitor centre.
- Creating a new visitor facility.
- Developing an innovative natural play facility.
- Extending the network of paths and trails.
- Strengthening the links to local village(s).
- Promoting active travel and improved connections with sustainable travel choices.
- Creation of a new arrival point & parking.
- Developing the sites environmental capacity and biodiversity.
- Investment in Countryside Ranger Services and Educational Services

Castle Semple Country Park is a location with huge potential and capacity to contribute to national outcomes of sustainable, liveable and productive places. It can act as a driver for regional tourism and support wider programmes for health and well-being, placemaking and community wealth building. Building a broad consensus of support and developing the Castle Semple Country Park Masterplan will ensure the concept of the Regional Park and Country Parks as outlined in the 1970's remains a valid and meaningful part of our 21st Century ambitions for future generations.



06

Project Development & Next Steps

6.1 Project Development & Next Steps
Renfrewshire Council and the Park Ranger Service are developing the short-term project proposals into Concept Design (RIBA Stage 1-2). Each of the projects will be advanced through the standard RIBA Design stages (Stages 2-6) proposals (where relevant) to ensure appropriate design and extent of consents and approvals.

Renfrewshire Council are proposing to make a formal submission requesting RTIF support funding based on the short-term priority projects set out in Section 5.6.

A number of projects are being advanced with initial feasibility level assessments by Renfrewshire Council. These include (traffic and transport, roads safety, on-site surveys etc.) works (e.g., road markings, safety surfaces and controlled crossings).

A number of the RTIF projects would be classed as 'Permitted Development' (subject to confirmation from Planning Services) and require only internal approvals following design stage approvals. Consultation and engagement including the on-line engagement has confirmed the project priorities with stakeholders with all project priorities supported through engagement.



6.2 Identification Programme of Short Term Investment

Project	Capital Spend	Design Stages 2-3	Design Stages 4-5	Completion
Toilet Facility	£275k	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q2 2024
Public Realm	£150k	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q2 2024
Trails & Boardwalk Initiatives	£300k	Q3 2023	Q1 2024	Q4 2024
Public Transport Connections	£100k	Q3 2022	Q4 2023	Q3 2024
Active Travel Connections	£100k	Q3 2023	Q3 2023	Q2 2024
Waymarking	£100k	Q3 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024
Railway Bridge Safety	£50k	TBC	TBC	Q3 2023
Clyde Muirshiel Visitor Centre	£150k	Q3 2023	Q1 2024	Q4 2024
Total	£1225k			

Investment and project delivery milestones subject to approvals and RTIF funding.

Project	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
Toilet Facility							
Public Realm							
Trails Initiative							
Public Transport Connections							
Active Travel Connections							
Waymarking							
Railway Bridge Safety							
Clyde Muirshiel Visitor Centre							
Total							

Indicative project programme subject to design development, approvals and RTIF funding.

6.3 Project Development Priority Projects

Renfrewshire Council have commissioned the development of the Castle Semple Prospectus that will seek to develop a vision and concept for Castle Semple Country Park and set a brief for masterplanning. The study is being advanced by consultants involved in a number of major park and greenspace projects (National Park Plans, HELIX, Country Parks, Heritage Parks) funded through Lottery and partnership-based funding.

6.4 Castle Semple – Start of a Journey

The development of this STIDP has been the catalyst for re-thinking the role and value of both the Regional Park and Country Parks and perhaps from a Renfrewshire Council perspective; encouraging more ambitious thinking about the needs for the future. This represents the start of a journey to explore and develop concept ideas for what would recreate and rebuild a strong, vibrant and sustainable Country Park for the future.

National policy and national outcomes now give full recognition of the need to protect, develop and enhance environmental assets and build a productive, healthier well-being economy for all.

Castle Semple Country Park has the potential to play a core role in delivering on national, regional and local outcomes. Engagement and concept development should seek to advance through a staged process. The intention should be to ensure a strong alignment of the Masterplan with the Regional Tourism Strategy with both fully supported and advanced alongside stakeholder engagement and a clear and robust Business Case to support external funding.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Summary Project Sheets Illustrating Draft RTIF Short List Projects.
Appendix 2	Table summarising potential Projects: Long List
Appendix 3	Table summarising potential Projects: Short List Projects
Appendix 4	Summary of Consultation & Engagement Feedback
Appendix 5	Tabulated Policy Summary

Appendix 1 - Summary Project Sheets Illustrating Draft RTIF Short List Projects.

Demolish & Renew Toilet & Hub Building

Project:

The existing toilet block building was condemned in 2019. The project provides a replacement facility incorporating a flexible space, shelter and seating. The flexi-space will provide either changing for independent watersports users or allow the re-establishment of a seasonal cycle hire facility on site.

Programme / Priority:

Early Action. High priority project meeting key user needs on site and with extended access and provision for DDA needs.

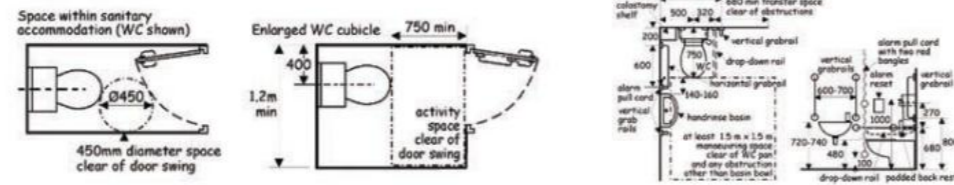
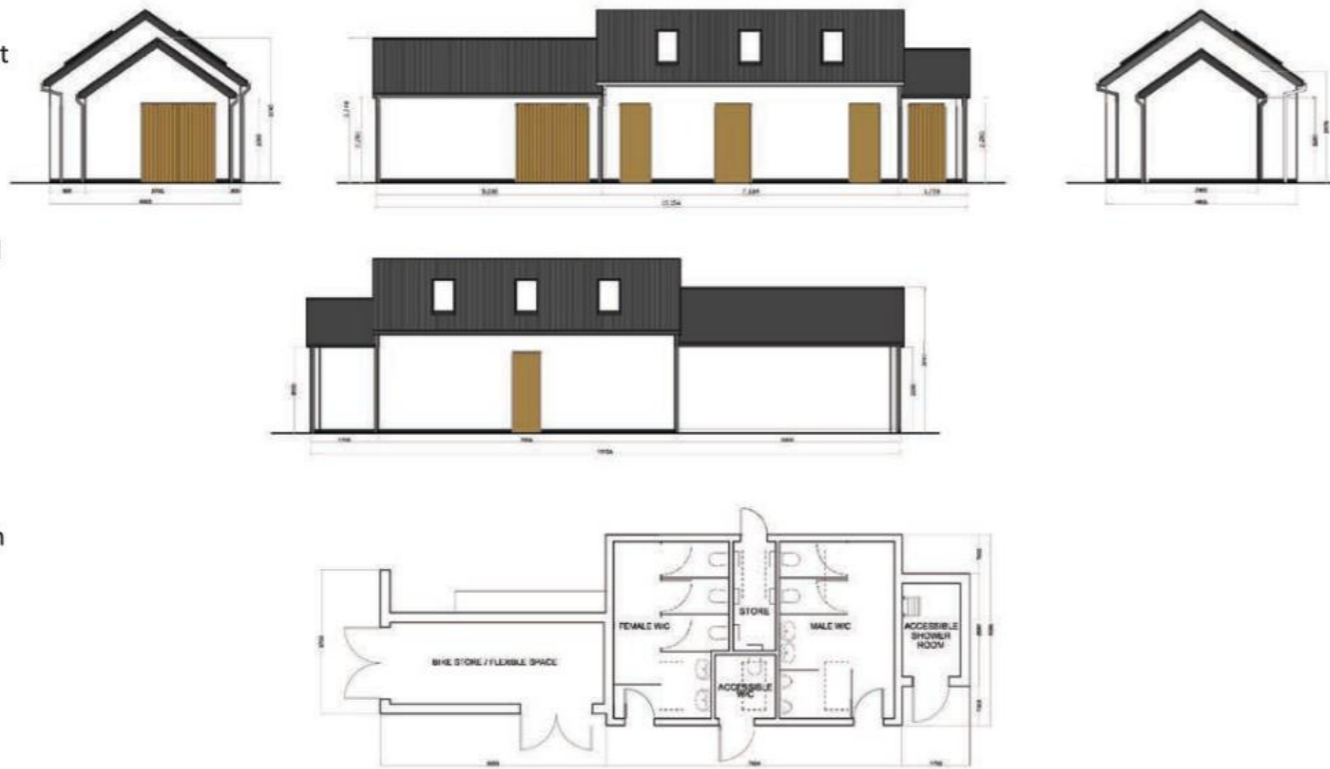
Design:

Design based on established models within National/Country Parks based on a simple timber frame building with solid timber secure sliding doors with rendered blockwork and slate tiled roof incorporating shelters in roof overhangs. Ref: General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations / BS 6465-1:

45-50 m2 GFA compliant with Document-M of Building Regulation with standard toilet fittings on tiles floor/wall. Upgraded services / & ground slab.

Approvals & Consents:

Replacement of existing facility. Planning Consent required. Detail reviewed Planning Officers detail application. No new utility connections. Re-uses all existing drainage connections.



			RTIF	
Priority	Engagement	Consents	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable
High Priority	Supported	Required	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable

Improvements to Public Realm/ Access

Project:

Small public realm and access improvements particularly to circulation will address higher intensity use and minimise pedestrian/cycle/vehicular conflicts in the area of the Visitor Centre.

Early Action. High priority project to address higher levels of use and to prioritise Disabled / Active Travel / Public Transport users over car users.

Design:

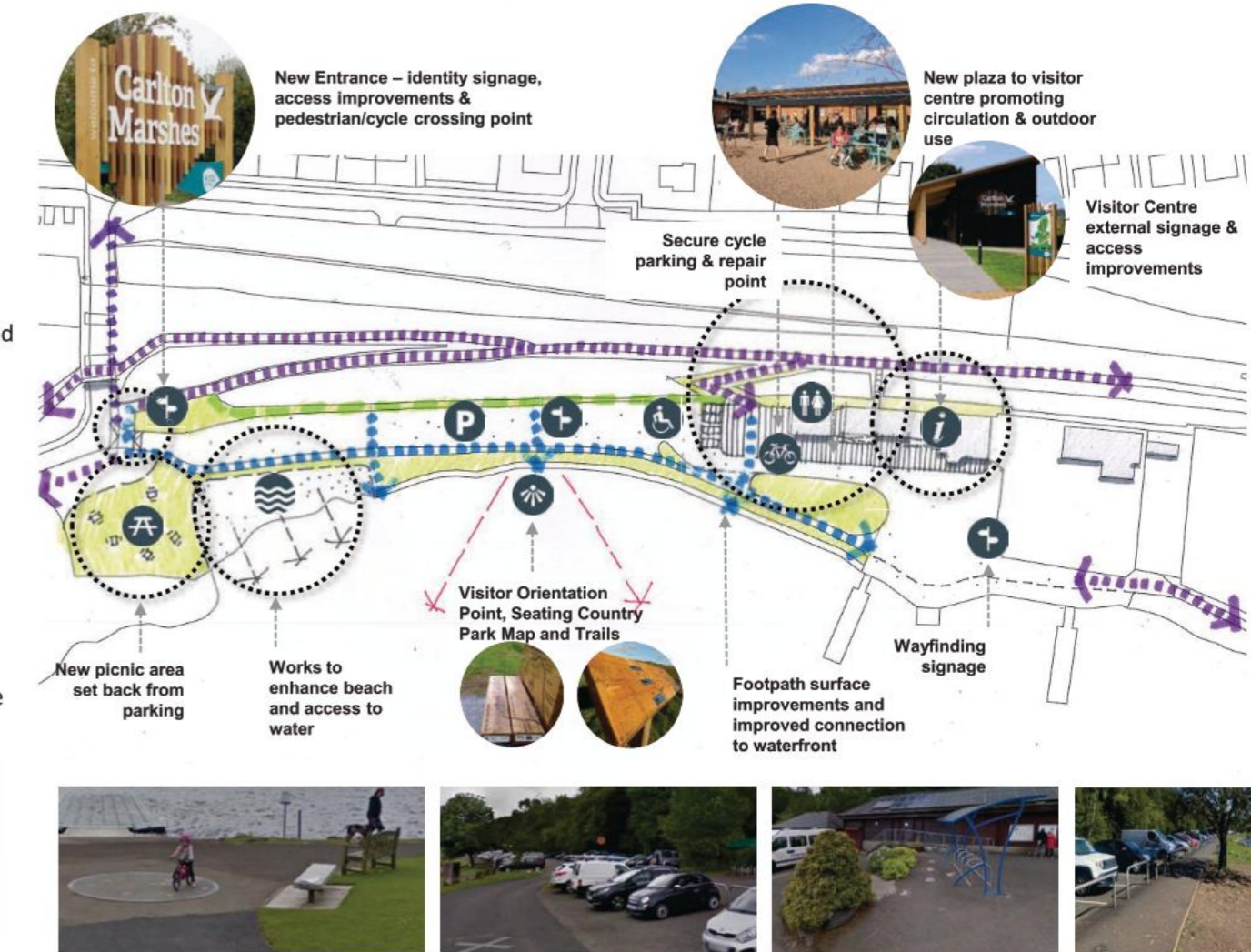
Simple external design improvements focussed on functionality and creating car-free space for groups and visitors in the area of the centre / toilet facility / NCR arrival point. Re-organisation of cycle parking and soft landscape elements.

Upgrading to create a more appealing, functionally more usable and more welcoming sense of space that encourages outdoor use and activity.

Approvals & Consents:

Majority of the works involve upgrading work undertaken under Permitted Development (PD) with detail to be agreed with RC Planning/Estates and Ranger Services. Re-uses all existing drainage connections.

			RTIF	
Priority	Engagement	Consents	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable
High Priority	Supported	PD	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable



Develop Trails Initiative (CS Trail)

Project:

Strengthen the 'trails initiative' with an innovative educational trail/walkway and viewing hubs connecting Castle Semple more strongly/legibly to the connecting other attractions & sister facilities (Parkhill Wood /RSPB). Introduce shorter circular trails that compliment and link the RSPB Boardwalk and connections towards Rail Station improving safe access to Lochwinnoch Village Centre.

Programme / Priority:

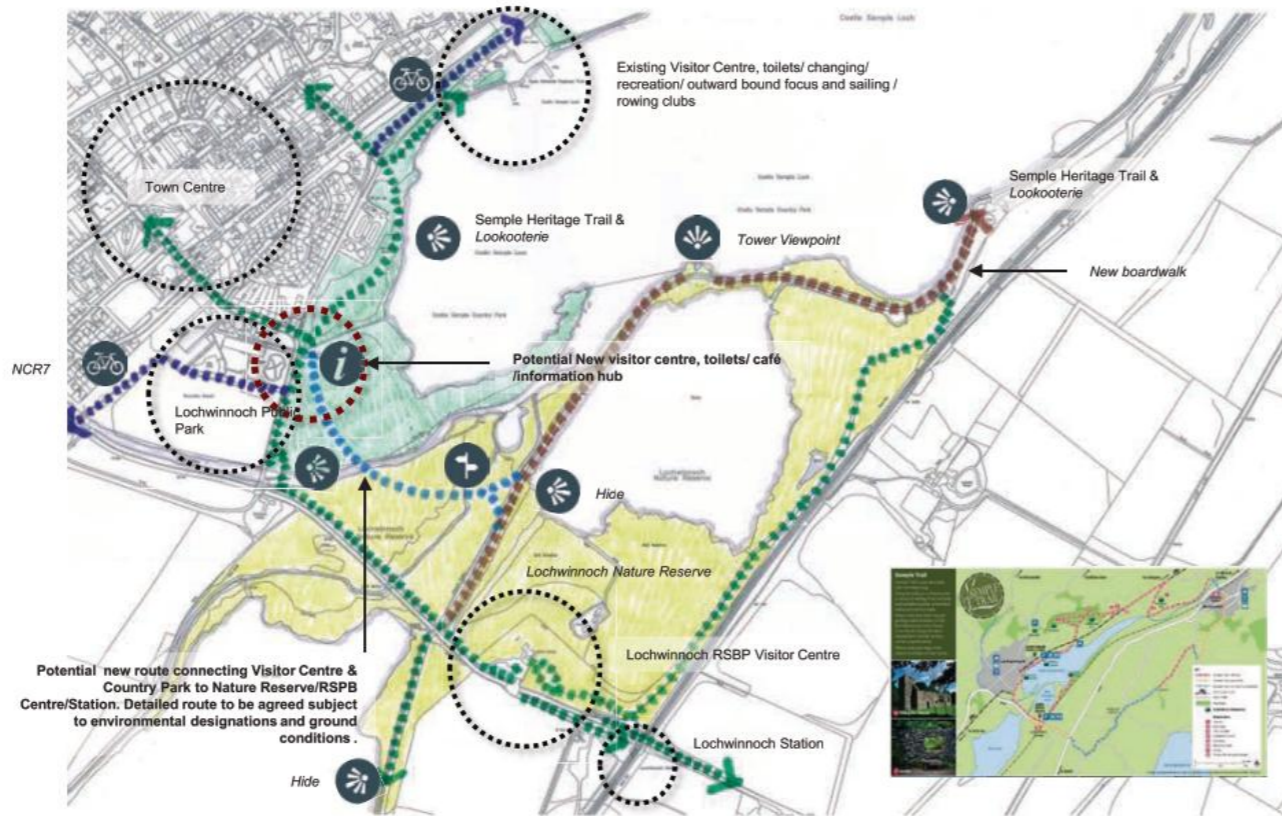
Early Action. High priority project meeting key user needs on site And supporting visitor dispersal. Creates extended access and improved provision for DDA / Public Transport users.

Design:

Provision of Orientation Signage within the Visitor Centre public realm and better connections to the CS Trails including route connecting to RSPB and final phase of their boardwalk. Standard sealed path construction providing access for all user groups.

Approvals & Consents:

Permitted Development (PD) with detail to be agreed with RC Planning/Ranger Service/NatureScot. Local deck/ bridge structures to protect minor watercourses.



			RTIF	
High Priority	Supported	Agree Routing NatureScot	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable

Public Transport Access (Rail Station)

Project:

The project seeks to improve access and connections at Lochwinnoch Rail Station for pedestrians and cyclists with the provision of a Toucan Crossing on the A760 at the Railway Station steps (connecting to southbound platform) and improvements to signage and path connection to Castle Semple/RSPB on the A760.

Programme / Priority:

Early Action. High priority project to improve public transport connectivity and support use of sustainable travel and make Castle Semple Country Park friendly for active travel/ PT users.

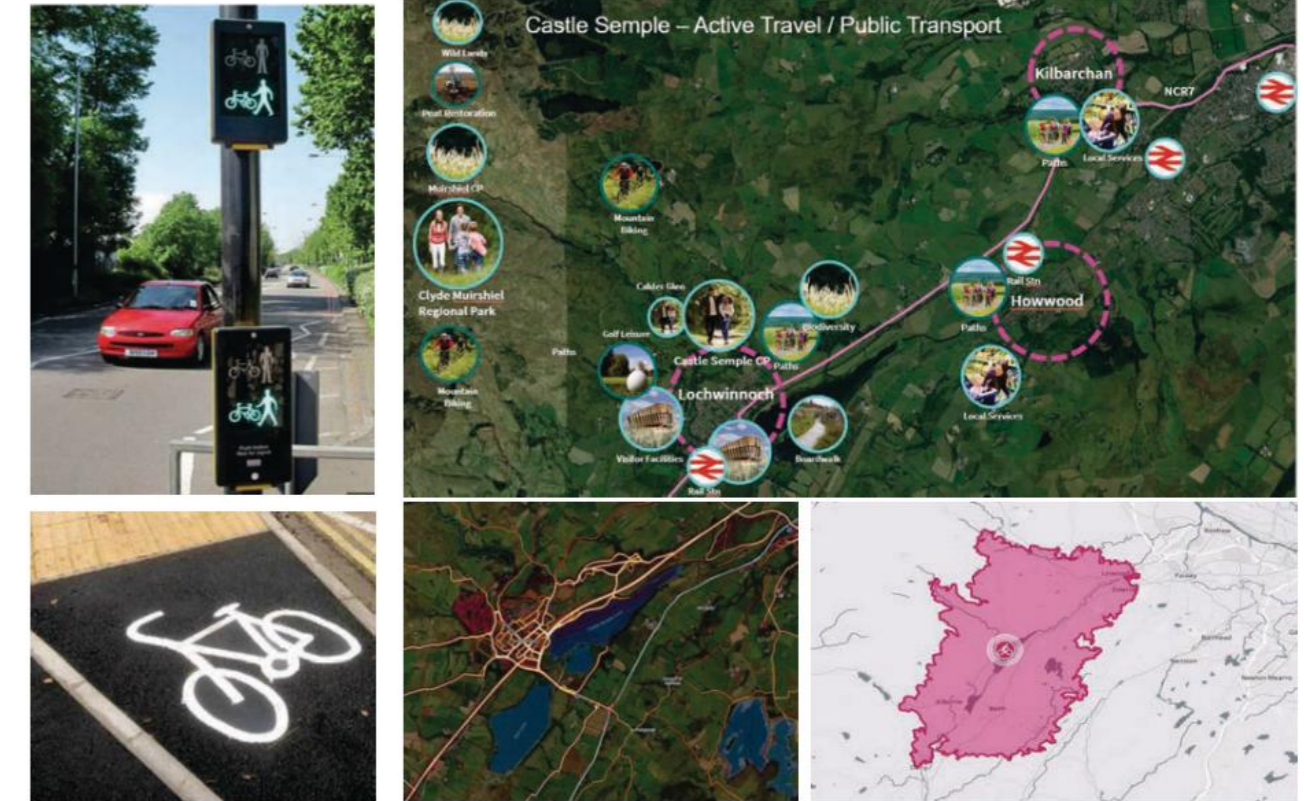
Design:

New Toucan Crossing. Upgrading of path to Station (vegetation trimming). Continuous pavement at RSPB site and improved signage. Alternative of access road upgrading and new pedestrian bridge could offer alternative.

Approvals & Consents:

Scope of work to be undertaken by RC Roads as part of network services improvement and promotion of active travel / public transport connections.

			RTIF	
High Priority	Supported	Agree Detail RC Roads	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable



Active Travel Connections

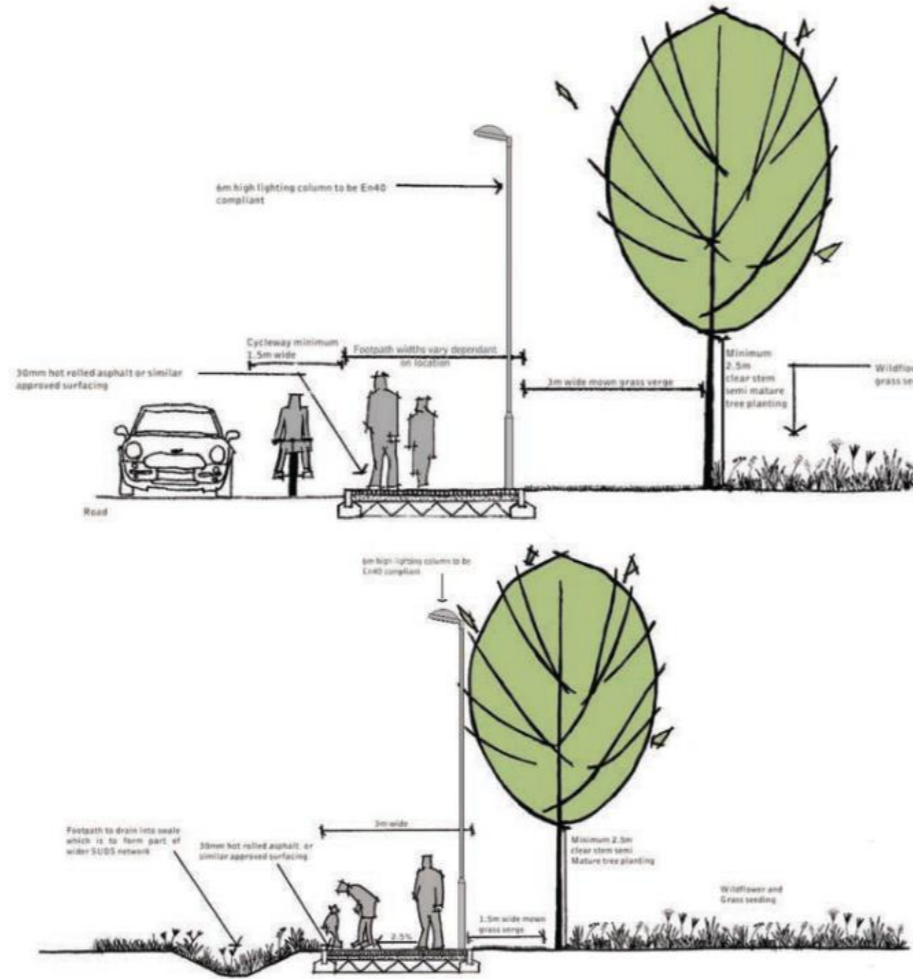
Project: Improve the connections by promoting active travel priorities with continuous footway / cycleways. Improve grading and connections to NCR7 and Active Travel Routes / Trails to make dispersal of visitors and connections easier.

Programme / Priority: Early Action. High priority project meeting key user needs on site and with extended access and provision for DDA / PT users.

Design: Local improvements in areas of high intensity use to support active travel (pedestrian / cyclists) and make Castle Semples Country Park family and cycle friendly. Local path widening and crossovers. Introduction of ramp / path grading at congestion points.

Approvals & Consents: Upgrading undertaken under Permitted Development (PD) with detail to be agreed with RC Planning/Estates and Ranger Services.. Re-uses all existing drainage connections.

			RTIF	
Priority	Engagement	Consents	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable
High Priority	Supported	PD	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable



Signs, Orientation & Wayfinding

Project: Upgrade the family of way-marking signs to develop clearer messaging connecting Castle Semples with Lochwinnoch/ Howwood/Kilbarchan and inviting dispersal of visitors supporting peak capacity/facilitating further exploration of local place assets.

Programme / Priority: Early Action. High priority project meeting key user needs on site and with extended access and provision for DDA / CPT users. Complete and ensure all Cycle-Link signs are operational

Design: Develop a suite of proposals that build on the existing character and signage detailing / lookouteries. Existing signage is 10-15 years old with all existing signs replaced or re-purposed. Ensure all signs / information supports place quality, avoids clutter and minimises future maintenance.

Approvals & Consents: Upgrading undertaken under Permitted Development (PD) with detail to be agreed with RC Planning/Estates and Ranger Services.. Re-uses all existing drainage connections.

			RTIF	
Priority	Engagement	Consents	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable
High Priority	Supported	PD	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable



Railway Bridge/Entrance Safety Improvements

Project:

The existing entrance junction is on a Non-classified local road immediately south of a former rail bridge. The area combines walking/ cycling and vehicular movements. Increased use creates the potential for conflict with measures proposed to improve safety and prioritise active travel users.

Programme / Priority:

Early Action. High priority project. Addresses user concerns with vehicular movement in area of high pedestrian /cycle movement.

Design:

Road geometry limits amendment to road geometry. Measures include new road surfacing. Rubble strip and continuous footway across junction with revised road markings. Safety barrier and signage.

Approvals & Consents:

Detail agreed with Renfrewshire Council Roads & Transport to offer priority to pedestrian / cycle users and better define priorities at junction. Improvements to sightlines on apex of road curve by trimming over grown vegetation.

			RTIF	
Priority	Engagement	Consents		
High Priority	Supported	Advanced RC Roads	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable



Muirshiel Visitor Centre

Project:

Provision for innovative play within site. Small play facility to meet needs of children/ younger audiences providing barrier free/inclusive play and a short family oriented short circular walk from Visitor Centre. Supporting Muirshiel for shorter trails and walks and family based outdoor countryside activity.

Programme / Priority:

Early Action. High priority project meeting key user needs and supporting visitor dispersal within CMRP - Country Parks

Design:

Innovative small play facility based on countryside location and character developed using natural materials (timber / rocks / gravel / sand) allowing adventure play for all ages.

Approvals & Consents:

Upgrading undertaken under Permitted Development (PD) with detail to be agreed with RC Planning/Estates and Ranger Services.. Re-uses all existing drainage connections.

			RTIF	
Priority	Engagement	Consents		
High Priority	Supported	PD	Eligible	12 Month Deliverable



Appendix 2 - Long List Projects

**CASTLE SEMPLE
RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL RSTRATEGIC TOURISM INFRASTRUTURE PLAN
IDEAS/ PROJECT LONG-LIST - V004 February 2023**

Initial Ideas Ref	Draft Project	Priority	Draft Order of Cost	Potential Eligibility RTIF	Draft Scope/Description
LL1	Demolish Toilet Block (linked to 11)	High	Low £0.05million		Demolish condemned Toilet Block to reorganise frontage improve accessibility and provide new toilet and changing facility providing better capacity/user needs & disability provision within single new build facility.
LL2	Place Based Improvements External Public Realm	High	Medium £0.3- £0.6million		Place and visitor infrastructure public realm improvements to external environment to CS Centre to improve capacity, accessibility and circulation and improve amenity and DDA inclusive access/mobility
LL3	Public Realm Improvements Water-Edge Treatment	Medium	Medium £0.5- £0.7million		Provide a boardwalk within the public realm to offer a safer, higher amenity and usable water-edge (launching kayaks/SUP's and segregate public realm from car park. Provide seating/access to waters-edge
LL4	Comprehensive Public Realm Enhancement of Castle Semple	Medium	Medium £0.8- £1.0million		Comprehensive upgrading of external works across the public areas of Castle Semple. Creating a quality experience along the northern and SW sides of the loch with soft treatments to sensitive habitat zone.
LL5	Circulation Improvements	Medium	Low £0.2- £0.5million		Reorganise parking to better meet the needs of all users and provide enhanced facilities for pedestrian /cyclists/mobility impaired and ensure better facilities for cycle parking/charging.
LL6	Develop the Trails Initiative	High	TBC		Improve capacity to disperse visitors and encourage exploration, contact with nature, activity and active travel within the Country Park, links to Lochwinnoch Village Centre and RSPB facilities.
LL7	Destination Services Improvement to facilities	Medium	Medium £0.4- 0.6million		Improve amenity and operational management focussed on built facilities of the site for all users with improved signage, lighting, seating, recycling facilities and site/wider CMCP /trail information.
LL8	Centre Building Upgrade (Option A: Reorganisation)	High Study in Progress	Medium £0.4-0.6 million		Restructure the Centre Building to make the building better for Outdoor Leisure service user needs/ capacity including internal re-organisation and stronger sense of welcome. Option envisages further RC/Private investment in commercial leisure (café/hospitality) on adjacent site
LL9	Centre Building Upgrade (Option B: New Extension Simpson Brown Proposal)	Option	High £3.0- £3.5million		Refurbish and reorganisation of Centre Building to provide new extension creating (Simpson Brown) additional flexible Community / Educational space within the building with extension to provide additional capacity including replacement toilet and new changing /orientation space
LL10	New Toilet/Changing Facility (Option C: New Facility)	Option	Medium/High £1.5- £2.0million		Create new toilet and changing facility with improvements to capacity for on-site storage facilities for watersport activity that meets needs of the centre's expanding programme of support to Young People and special needs/interest groups.

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Appendix 3 - Short List Projects

Ref	Draft Project	Priority	Order of Cost	RC and Others	RTIF	Scope/Description
01	Demolish Toilet Block Provide New Toilets	High	£0.2-£0.30m	£55k	£220k	Demolish condemned Toilet Block. Provide new facility for all users. Design to improve accessibility and small changing and/or shower area for independent watersports users plus additional Bike Hire Hub / Flexible Outlet Space to support bike hire / cycle activity and NCR7.
02	Improvements External Public Realm	High	£0.15-£0.2m	£30k	£120k	Place and visitor infrastructure public realm improvements to external environment to CS Centre to improve capacity, accessibility and circulation and improve amenity and DDA inclusive access/mobility. Potentially to include boardwalk/pontoon to waterfrontage.
06	Develop Trails & Boardwalk Initiatives	High	£0.25-£0.35m	£60k	£240k	Strengthen the 'trails initiative' with an innovative educational trail/walkway and viewing hubs connecting Castle Semple more legibly to other attractions & sister facilities (Parkhill Wood /RSPB). Compliments and links RSPB Boardwalk.
07	Public Transport Access (CS-Lochwinnoch Stn.)	High	£0.1m	£20k	£80k	Improve legibility ease of connections and provide signage Lochwinnoch Rail Station/ RSPB/Castle Semple with signage and information on Active Travel trails / Castle Semple Loch and CMRP. White lining and improve safe crossing for ped/cyclists.
09	Active Travel Connections	High	£0.1-0.2m	£20	£80k	Improve grading and connections to NCR7 and Active Travel Routes / Trails to make dispersal of visitors and connections easier. Connections to RSPB Boardwalk and connections to Lochwinnoch /Howwood rail stations.
10	Way-Marking from Visitor Arrival Points	High	£0.1-0.2m	£20k	£80k	Upgrade the family of way-marking signs to develop clearer messaging connecting Castle Semple with Lochwinnoch/ Howwood/Kilbarchan and inviting dispersal of visitors supporting peak capacity/facilitating further exploration of local place assets.
12	Railway Bridge (Ped/Cycle) Safe Movement/Capacity	High	£0.05m	£10k	£40k	Address pedestrian/ cycle and vehicular conflicts at the Railway Bridge (Church St/Lochlip Road) with new junction markings (white lining/hazard marking/cycle markings to road & cycleway plus sightline improvements
15	Muirshiel Visitor Centre	High	£0.1-£0.2m	£30k	£120k	Provision of play within site. Small play facility to meet needs of children/ younger audiences providing barrier free/inclusive play and a short family oriented short circular walk from Visitor Centre.
Totals				£245k	£980k	
Summary Total				£245k	£980k	Short Term Priority Investment £1,075,000 over 2 years
% Contributions				20%	80%	
TOTAL Phase 1 Investment						£1,225,000

Appendix 4 - Summary of Consultation & Engagement Feedback

CASTLE SEMPLE COUNTRY PARK - Initial Ideas Forum

Monday, April 03, 2023

136

Total Responses

Date Created: Thursday, January 26, 2023

Complete Responses: 136

Q6: What are your priority projects in the medium & longer term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 133 Skipped: 3

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Upgraded Castle Semple Visitor Centre	61.42% 78	29.13% 37	9.45% 12	127	1.48
New Additional Visitor Centre & Café Facility	66.93% 85	19.69% 25	13.39% 17	127	1.46
New Quality & Innovative Play Facilities	42.74% 53	33.87% 42	23.39% 29	124	1.81
Upgrade Public Realm/Landscape at Centre	40.98% 50	42.62% 52	16.39% 20	122	1.75
Upgrade Public Realm/Landscape & connections to RSPB	42.62% 52	42.62% 52	14.75% 18	122	1.72
Provide Hides & Places to Observe Nature	29.37% 37	49.21% 62	21.43% 27	126	1.92
Interpretation / Signage / Waymarking	36.89% 45	40.16% 49	22.95% 28	122	1.86
Better Path Connection to Howwood / Lochwinnoch / Kilbarchan	42.97% 55	35.94% 46	21.09% 27	128	1.78
Improved Water Sports Facilities	54.10% 66	31.15% 38	14.75% 18	122	1.61
Loch Water Catchment Management / Weir	38.98% 46	44.07% 52	16.95% 20	118	1.78
Safer & Better Road Crossings	45.45% 55	33.06% 40	21.49% 26	121	1.76
Clyde Muirshiel Country Park Centre Upgrade	61.16% 74	29.75% 36	9.09% 11	121	1.48
Castle Semple Loch Additional Trails & Walks	49.61% 63	37.80% 48	12.60% 16	127	1.63
New Entrance & Additional Parking (A760)	30.0% 36	40.0% 48	30.0% 36	120	2

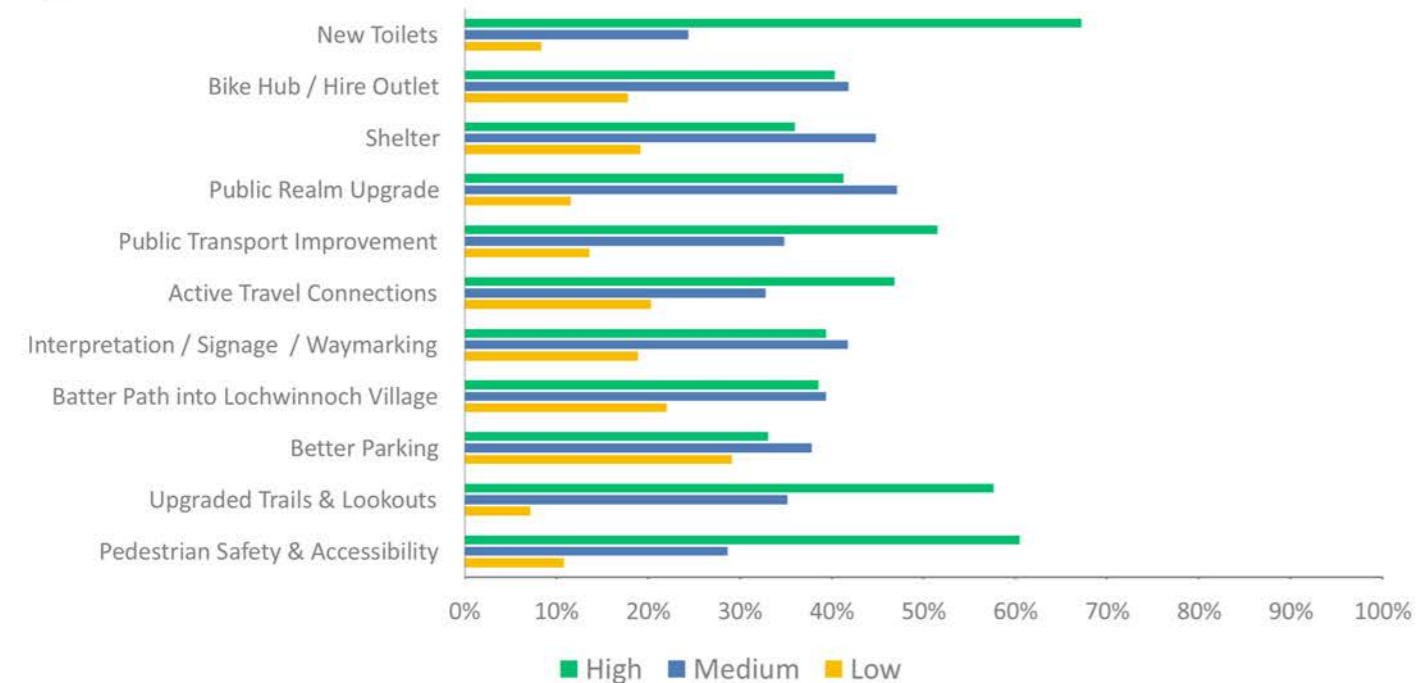
Q5: What are your priority projects in the short term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 136 Skipped: 0

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
New Toilets	67.18% 88	24.43% 32	8.40% 11	131	1.41
Bike Hub / Hire Outlet	40.31% 52	41.86% 54	17.83% 23	129	1.78
Shelter	36.00% 45	44.80% 56	19.20% 24	125	1.83
Public Realm Upgrade	41.32% 50	47.11% 57	11.57% 14	121	1.70
Public Transport Improvement	51.52% 68	34.85% 46	13.64% 18	132	1.62
Active Travel Connections	46.88% 60	32.81% 42	20.31% 26	128	1.73
Interpretation / Signage / Waymarking	39.37% 50	41.73% 53	18.90% 24	127	1.80
Better Path into Lochwinnoch Village	38.58% 49	39.37% 50	22.05% 28	127	1.83
Better Parking	33.07% 42	37.80% 48	29.13% 37	127	1.96
Upgraded Trails & Lookouts	57.60% 72	35.20% 44	7.20% 9	125	1.50
Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility	60.47% 78	28.68% 37	10.85% 14	129	1.50

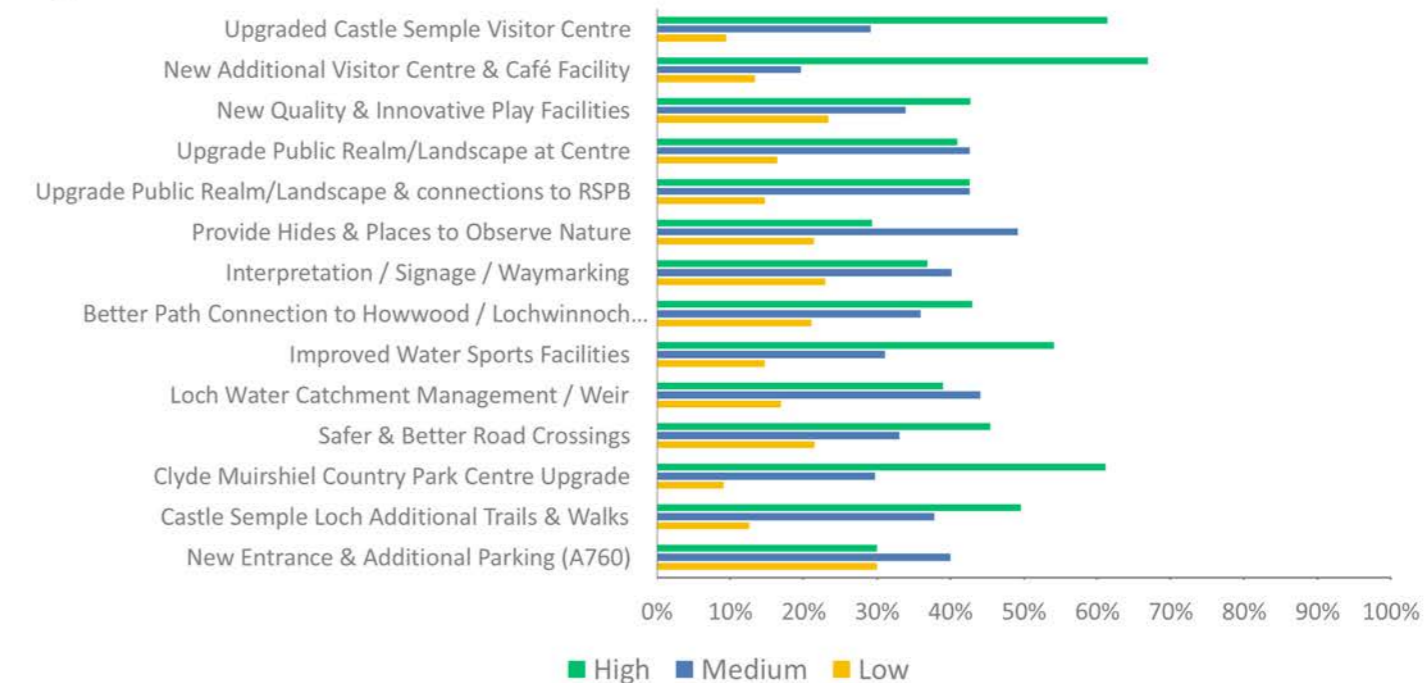
Q5: What are your priority projects in the short term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 136 Skipped: 0



Q6: What are your priority projects in the medium & longer term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 133 Skipped: 3



Appendix 5 - Tabulated Policy Summary

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The project will deliver against the policy objectives of key strategies set out by both Scottish and UK Government. The Project is also in line with Scottish Government's inclusive growth and health & wellbeing agenda, targeting regional imbalances in socio-economic activity and deprivation, and recognising the importance of developing the tourism sector, place-making and development of the rural economy. The key messages from these strategies, and the alignment with the project, are outlined below:

Scottish Policy Context	Regional/Local Policy Context
Scotland's Climate Change Plan	Glasgow City Region Economic Strategy 2017-2035
Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (2022)	Renfrewshire Council Plan 2022-2027
Programme for Government (PfG), Scottish Govt., 2021-22	Renfrewshire Councils Economic Strategy
National Planning Framework 4 (2023) - (NPF4)	Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) Rural Community Tourism Strategy
Place Principle - 20 Minute Neighbourhoods	Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021)
National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030	Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan

Strategy	Health Objectives	Alignment with CMRP/Castle Semple Planning
Scotland's Climate Change Plan	Scotland's ambitious climate change legislation sets a target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. Climate change is the single greatest threat to Scotland's environment. Climate change may affect the delicate balance of Scotland's ecosystems and transform Scotland's habitats and biodiversity, adding to existing pressures.	Regional Parks and Country Parks have a potentially key role in supporting sustainable activity in the countryside supporting Just Transition and providing an important resource for education and awareness of Climate Change issues
National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030	Sets out the national Tourism Strategy for Scotland to be world leaders in 21st century tourism built around the key priorities of our passionate people, our thriving places, our diverse businesses, our memorable experiences.	Renfrewshire Council is seeking to build a Regional Tourism Action Plan built on and supporting the national tourism strategy. Countryside activity, sports, leisure and recreation are emerging as a key theme.
National / Regional Transport Strategy (SPT)	<p>National Transport Strategy (reflecting the Climate Change Plan) sets out a commitment to reducing car kilometres by 20 per cent by 2030, to enable us to meet our net zero emissions target by 2045. Transport is Scotland's largest sectoral emitter, accounting for 29% of total greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>The Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Regional Strategy identifies four key transport outcomes across the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable travel • Improved connectivity • Access for all • Reduced emissions. 	Renfrewshire Council are looking to positively contribute to each of the SPT priority outcomes, improving facilities and networks for active travel that will improve connectivity and reduce car dependency and offer sustainable travel choices to all. Castle Semple with its access to rail/bus services provides a Country Park with good public transport access.

Strategy	Health Objectives	Alignment with CMRP/Castle Semple Planning
National Planning Framework 4 (2023)-(NPF4)	<p>NPF4 sets out the national spatial planning framework and forms part of the Development Plan.</p> <p>NPF4 sets out a national spatial strategy for Scotland and defines national planning policy. The NPF4 sets out six spatial principles relevant to the planning for rural assets.</p>	<p>The following 3 over-arching spatial principles are relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving and recycling assets. We will make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure and services, locking in carbon, minimising waste, and building a circular economy. • Local living. We will support local liveability and improve community health and wellbeing by ensuring people can easily access services, greenspace, learning, work and leisure locally. • Rebalanced development. We will target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand. • Rural revitalisation. We will encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognising the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together.
Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021)	The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan sets out an ambitious Spatial Strategy that provides a framework for the protection and enhancement of Renfrewshire's diverse natural environment and built and cultural heritage assets, the delivery of economic and infrastructure investment and it guides the future use of land to assist in creating strong communities and attractive places.	<p>Specific support and references to the rural economy, tourism and place development support CMRP and Castle Semple Country Park.</p> <p>The LDP includes a revitalised recognition of the built, natural, cultural and heritage tourism offering of Renfrewshire and the important contribution that the tourism sector makes to the Renfrewshire economy.</p>
Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020-2030	Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy 2020-2030 sets out the ambitions and actions to achieve sustained, inclusive growth of the Renfrewshire economy over the next 10 years. Its development has been led by the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel, bringing together leaders from across the private and public sector, enterprise agencies and education and skills experts	<p>New sectors in creative industries, tourism and care are identified as having the potential of diversifying the economy further and offering more opportunities for long-term, sustained and inclusive economic growth.</p> <p>The tourism sector is recognised as one of Scotland's key growth sectors. For Renfrewshire a thriving tourism industry built around the area's own offer can generate significant economic benefits and improve how the area is perceived to a wide audience of not just visitors but of potential investors</p>
Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan 2023	Renfrewshire Council is developing a Tourism Action Plan. The new Action Plan is at consultation stage and will provide an opportunity to reflect on the very positive experience of hosting successful events and delivering an energetic cultural programme and how to build on and complement this in the future.	The new Regional Tourism Action Plan is at the early consultation stage. Initial consultations have identified key issues and areas of opportunity but significant further dialogue with industry and alignment across Council and stakeholder groups is required.
Renfrewshire Cycling Strategy 2016-2025	The aim of this cycling strategy is simple: to get more people in Renfrewshire cycling more often. The strategy supports many of the aims of the council's business plan and Renfrewshire's community plan. Achieving these aims will bring many benefits for Renfrewshire's residents, its communities, its environment and its economy. By encouraging people to be more active, cycling can help to improve the health and wellbeing of people of all ages.	<p>The strategy notes:</p> <p>Stronger links with leisure and tourism, building on resources such as Gleniffer Braes and Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park (eg. developing mountain biking), and accommodation and attraction resources across the network (e.g. development of a network of Cyclist Havens).</p>



CASTLE SEMPLE COUNTRY PARK
Initial Ideas Forum

Consultation Summary Report

Consultation and Engagement

The STIDP has involved a joint working group engaging external stakeholders along with Council services (including the Place and Regeneration, Park and Ranger services and Environment and Infrastructure teams).

Renfrewshire Council are very aware that the concept needs to engage and build support across a diverse range of stakeholders. Early indications have confirmed support for short term project initiatives (RTIF applications) and outlined medium term ideas for further development of Castle Semple as a primary gateway facility for the Regional Park.

Consultation Events & Stakeholder Group Presentations

The broad concepts and draft proposals have been subject to consultation with stakeholder groups through presentations and events. These have included:

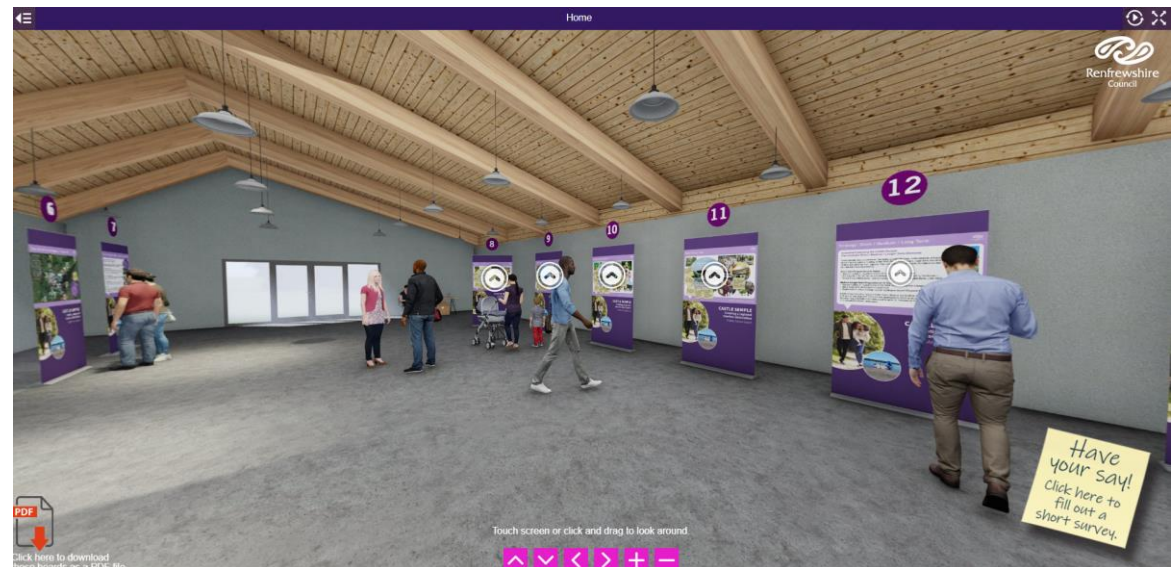
- Clyde Muirshiel Liaison Group. Member and cross departmental officer group with responsibility for coordination of Renfrewshire Council's management of CMRP within Renfrewshire.
- The Villages Local Partnership is a formally constituted group of seven local Community Councils (Lochwinnoch, Howwood, Kilbarchan, Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Elderslie, Houston). Castle Semple proposals were presented to this group.
- Stakeholder & Public Consultation Event hosted at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre 23rd February 2023 attended by 60-80 stakeholders, residents and park users. Consultees completed questionnaires and indicated priorities / preferences at the event and on-line.



Consultation Event at Castle Semple Visitor Centre

Consultation On-line with Supporting Survey

- Virtual Engagement (On-line Consultation - available on-line on computers, digital devices and phones) provides a virtual 'Consultation Room' duplicating presentation materials used for other events but undertaken to make the consultation more inclusive and seek responses and feedback from individuals and groups unable to attend events.
- The on-line consultation has been viewed 614 times with over 136 questionnaires completed on-line. On-line consultation has proved to be very successful in extending engagement and inviting comment from within community organisations, clubs and wider user groups and the general public.
- The On-line Questionnaire provided a both qualitative and quantitative feedback through a standard suite of questions around project priorities, user needs and views on the adequacy or otherwise of the existing facilities.



Online Consultation using i:engage web-based tool

Consultation Survey

The consultation event and online consultation (i-engage) used SurveyMonkey to collect the views across a diverse range of user, stakeholder and local community groups. The survey included:

- 60-80 people attended the event.
- 614 online viewers to the website.
- 136 surveys completed.
- 64 comment forms and post-it notes.
- Plus, study consultees with key stakeholder interests.
- Total consultees in excess of 700 people.

Consultation Results – Priority Projects

The consultations advised of the key priorities for both short-term and long-term projects and these are reported below:-

High Priority Short Term Projects

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. New Toilets | 67.18% |
| 2. Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility | 60.47% |
| 3. Upgraded Trails & lookouts | 57.6% |

High Priority Medium / Longer Term Projects

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. New Additional Visitor Centre & Café Facility | 66.93% |
| 2. Upgraded Castle Semple Visitor Centre | 61.42% |
| 3. Muirshiel Country Park Centre Upgrade | 61.16% |

Priorities: Short Term

5. What are your priority projects in the short term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

	High	Medium	Low
New Toilets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike Hub / Hire Outlet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shelter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Realm Upgrade	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Transport Improvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Active Travel Connections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpretation / Signage / Waymarking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Batter Path into Lochwinnoch Village	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better Parking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upgraded Trails & Lookouts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>		

Priorities: Medium & Longer Term

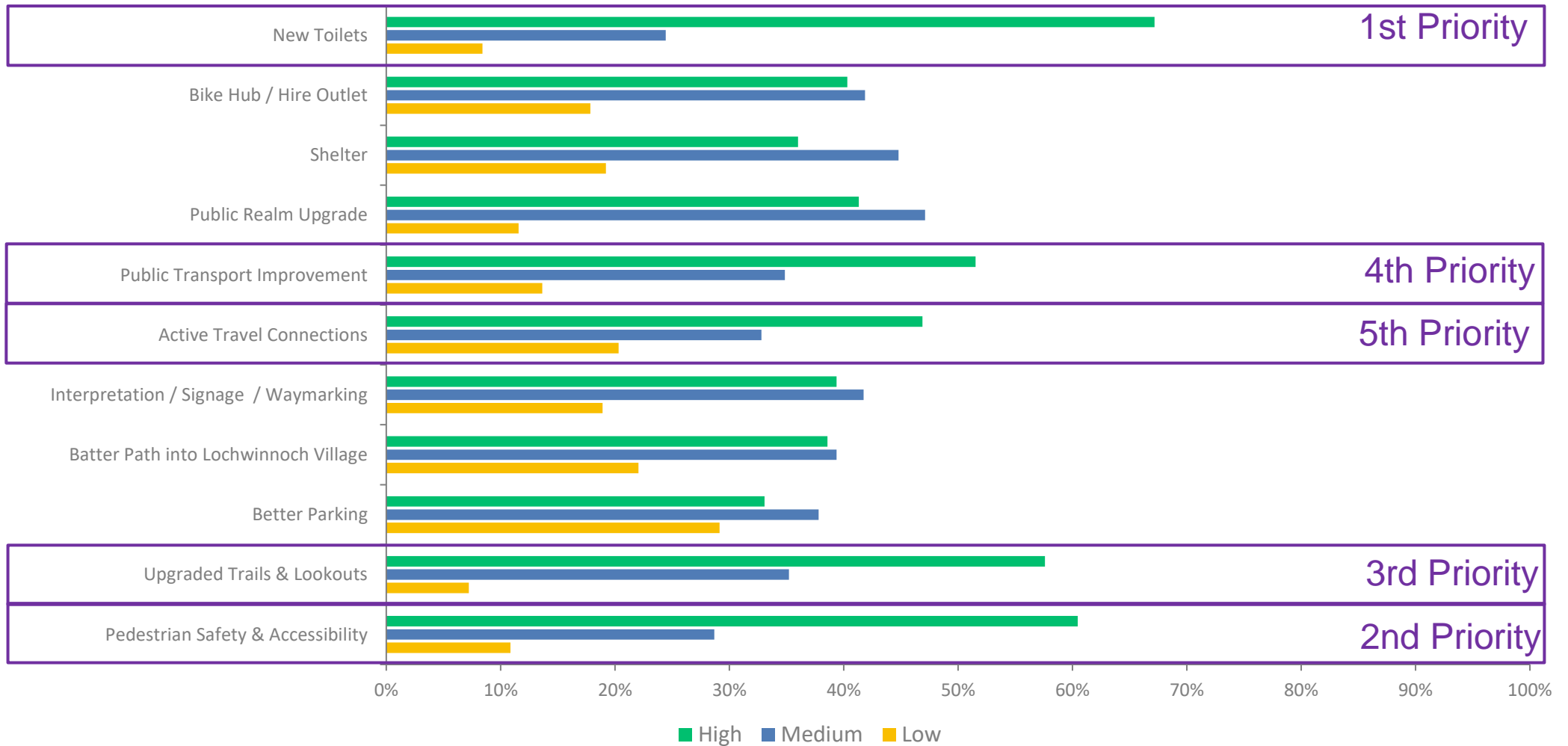
6. What are your priority projects in the medium & longer term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

	High	Medium	Low
Upgraded Castle Semple Visitor Centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Additional Visitor Centre & Café Facility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Quality & Innovative Play Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upgrade Public Realm/Landscape at Centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upgrade Public Realm/Landscape & connections to RSPB	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide Hides & Places to Observe Nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpretation / Signage / Waymarking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better Path Connection to Howwood / Lochwinnoch /Kilbarchan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved Water Sports Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loch Water Catchment Management / Weir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safer & Better Road Crossings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clyde Muirshiel Country Park Centre Upgrade	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Castle Semple Loch Additional Trails & Walks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Entrance & Additional Parking (A760)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>		

Stakeholder views were sought using consultation forms and online SurveyMonkey

Q5: What are your priority projects in the short term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 136 Skipped: 0



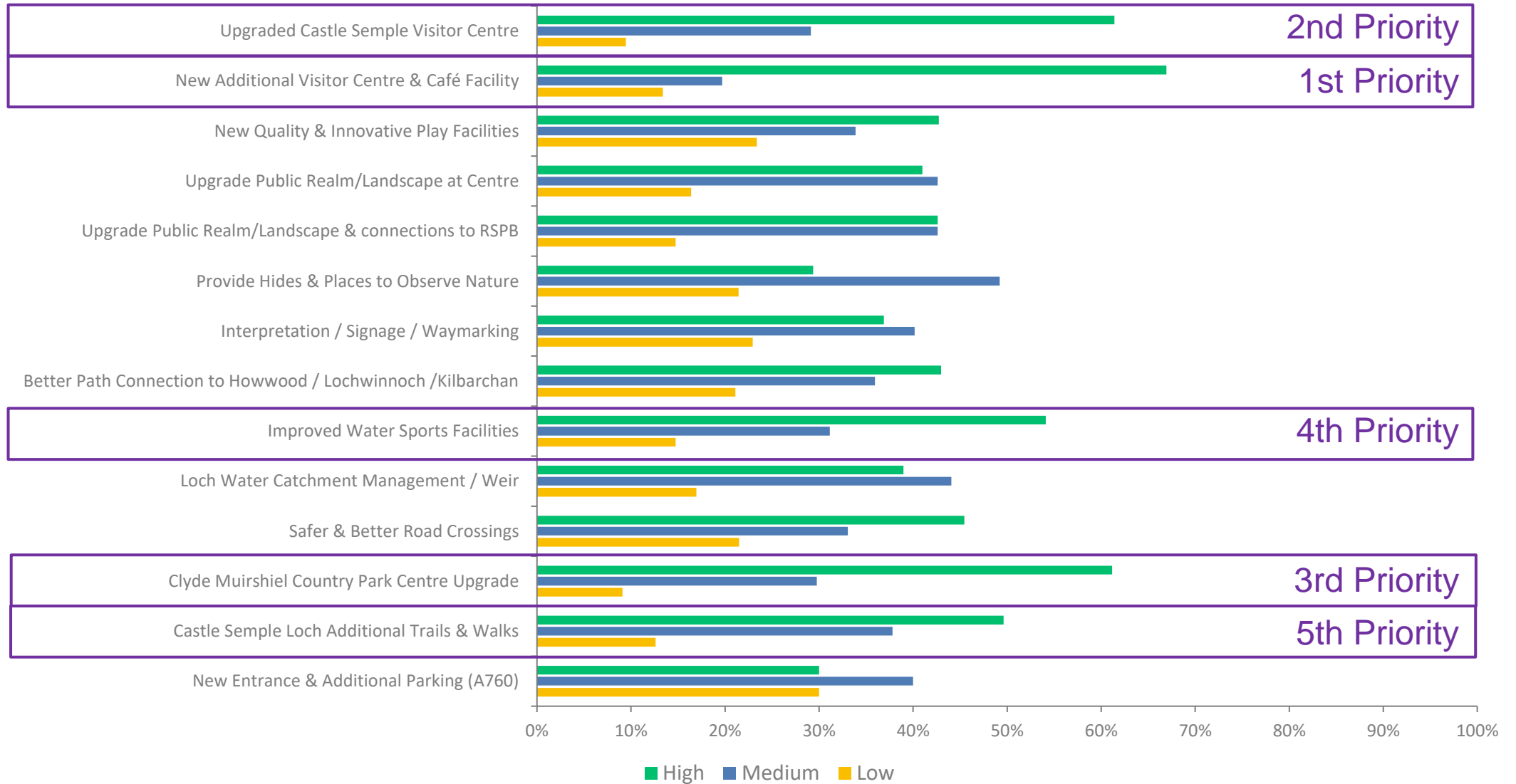
Q5: What are your priority projects in the short term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 136 Skipped: 0

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE	
New Toilets	67.18% 88	24.43% 32	8.40% 11	131	1.41	1st Priority
Bike Hub / Hire Outlet	40.31% 52	41.86% 54	17.83% 23	129	1.78	
Shelter	36.00% 45	44.80% 56	19.20% 24	125	1.83	
Public Realm Upgrade	41.32% 50	47.11% 57	11.57% 14	121	1.70	
Public Transport Improvement	51.52% 68	34.85% 46	13.64% 18	132	1.62	4th Priority
Active Travel Connections	46.88% 60	32.81% 42	20.31% 26	128	1.73	5th Priority
Interpretation / Signage / Waymarking	39.37% 50	41.73% 53	18.90% 24	127	1.80	
Batter Path into Lochwinnoch Village	38.58% 49	39.37% 50	22.05% 28	127	1.83	
Better Parking	33.07% 42	37.80% 48	29.13% 37	127	1.96	
Upgraded Trails & Lookouts	57.60% 72	35.20% 44	7.20% 9	125	1.50	3rd Priority
Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility	60.47% 78	28.68% 37	10.85% 14	129	1.50	2nd Priority

Q6: What are your priority projects in the medium & longer term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 133 Skipped: 3



Q6: What are your priority projects in the medium & longer term? Please select your Top 6 Priority Projects in the High column & Indicate your views on the priority level of the other projects.

Answered: 133 Skipped: 3

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE	
Upgraded Castle Semple Visitor Centre	61.42% 78	29.13% 37	9.45% 12	127	1.48	2nd Priority
New Additional Visitor Centre & Café Facility	66.93% 85	19.69% 25	13.39% 17	127	1.46	1st Priority
New Quality & Innovative Play Facilities	42.74% 53	33.87% 42	23.39% 29	124	1.81	
Upgrade Public Realm/Landscape at Centre	40.98% 50	42.62% 52	16.39% 20	122	1.75	
Upgrade Public Realm/Landscape & connections to RSPB	42.62% 52	42.62% 52	14.75% 18	122	1.72	
Provide Hides & Places to Observe Nature	29.37% 37	49.21% 62	21.43% 27	126	1.92	
Interpretation / Signage / Waymarking	36.89% 45	40.16% 49	22.95% 28	122	1.86	
Better Path Connection to Howwood / Lochwinnoch /Kilbarchan	42.97% 55	35.94% 46	21.09% 27	128	1.78	
Improved Water Sports Facilities	54.10% 66	31.15% 38	14.75% 18	122	1.61	4th Priority
Loch Water Catchment Management / Weir	38.98% 46	44.07% 52	16.95% 20	118	1.78	
Safer & Better Road Crossings	45.45% 55	33.06% 40	21.49% 26	121	1.76	
Clyde Muirshiel Country Park Centre Upgrade	61.16% 74	29.75% 36	9.09% 11	121	1.48	3rd Priority
Castle Semple Loch Additional Trails & Walks	49.61% 63	37.80% 48	12.60% 16	127	1.63	5th Priority
New Entrance & Additional Parking (A760)	30.0% 36	40.0% 48	30.0% 36	120	2	



To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Invest in Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 Further to previous reports regarding the development of Start-Up Street initiatives in Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew this report provides a short update on progress across all three centres which are at 100% occupancy.
- 1.2 Start-Up Street is an economic development initiative which aims to help grow the local economy by supporting start-up businesses looking to make their first step into commercial premises.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board members are asked to:
 - (i) Note the overview and progress of the Start-Up Street developments which are all now at 100% occupancy and provide 26 supported incubation space and 7 hot desking spaces to local businesses.

3. Overview

- 3.1 Start-Up Street is an economic development initiative in Renfrewshire offering new and growing businesses low-cost, high-quality workspace and wraparound support to nurture and develop early-stage business.

- 3.2 Initially approved by the Leadership Board in December 2018 the Start-Up Street proposal responded to the local need for low-cost business space with ongoing business advice and support. It aimed to encourage business growth and support the leap into commercial premises.
- 3.3 The incubation spaces are offered for a maximum of 2 years to small or early-stage businesses with a staged rental model which increases over the 2 years. At the end of the contract period the business will be paying the full rental value and can then be supported to move to an alternative commercial space in the Renfrewshire area.
- 3.4 The Start Up Street model was developed to address as many local requirements as possible and each project aims to provide a high degree of added value such as utilising long term vacant premises, supporting the local regeneration of the area, supporting under-represented groups and identifying where the greatest impacts can be made.

4. Start-Up Street Paisley

- 4.1 The first Start-Up Street initiative was developed at refurbished Council owned commercial units at 65-71 George Street, Paisley. Opening in October 2020 it provides 12 managed workspaces for early stage businesses. The centre was fully occupied within the first 3 months and due to the success, and the demand for places, plans for further centres are being developed.
- 4.2 Start-Up Street Paisley is delivered in partnership with Launch IT, Paisley, a social enterprise with a focus on youth entrepreneurship. Around half of the spaces are specifically for young entrepreneurs.
- 4.3 Since opening, Start-Up Street Paisley has provided support to 67 local businesses. Initial tenants have completed the 2-year support offer and have moved out. Launch It have published a short report (attached as Appendix 1) with an overview of the first few years and highlighting some of the businesses supported.
- 4.4 Demand for units and support remains high with a waiting list in place to ensure that new businesses can be supported as spaces within the centre become available.
- 4.5 All 12 business units are currently fully occupied with a range of businesses which include a local radio station, clothing designer, tailoring services, ecommerce retail, beauty therapy, upcycling, and diving tuition.
- 4.6 In addition to the managed workspaces, Start-Up Street Paisley offers a tailored programme of support to pre-start businesses which aims to help them progress their business idea to start-up stage creating a culture of entrepreneurship in Renfrewshire.

5. Start-Up Street Johnstone

- 5.1 Start Up Street Johnstone is delivered in partnership with Active Communities, an award-winning health and wellbeing charity in Renfrewshire.
- 5.2 Based at Station 7, Quarry Street, Johnstone the managed workspaces opened in August 2022 providing 4 well-appointed business units in redeveloped garage areas at the centre. In line with the remit of Active Communities, Start-Up Street Johnstone also has a focus on health and wellbeing businesses. Business advice and support is provided by the Council's Economic Development Service with Active Communities acting as landlord.
- 5.3 In the first year of operating two of the initial four tenants (a creative therapies training company and healthy eating catering company) grew at a quicker rate than anticipated and successfully progressed to renting their own commercial premises within Johnstone.
- 5.4 Two new businesses quickly replaced the two who moved on and the centre is currently fully occupied with four businesses offering services in podiatry, baby massage classes, a health and wellbeing clinic and physiotherapy.
- 5.5 All four businesses are developing well, and further reports and future evaluations will be brought back to Board in due course.

6. Start-Up Street Renfrew

- 6.1 The third centre to open was Start Up Street Renfrew, based at 7-13 Dunlop Crescent where long term vacant Council retail units were fully refurbished to provide 10 modern managed workspaces of different sizes to accommodate business needs and an additional range of hot-desking spaces.
- 6.2 Start-Up Street Renfrew is managed by Inspirent Ltd, a very successful and well-established not-for-profit business consultancy. Inspirent have successfully delivered a range of Business Gateway services in Renfrewshire, across many years, since they were established in 1987.
- 6.3 Start-Up Street Renfrew opened in February 2023 and, following two successful open days, the centre is now fully occupied by a range of businesses. The new centre hosts start-ups including product design and innovation, photographer, podcasting studio, audiologist, physiotherapy, counselling service, financial coaching, and children's sports coaching.
- 6.4 In addition to the managed workspaces, the centre uniquely has 7 co-working and hot desking spaces which offer a flexible business space for very early stage businesses who are still planning their business proposals but with plans to progress to commercial premises in the future.
- 6.5 All businesses within the centre have access to an enterprise manager as well as a Council Business Start-Up advisor.

- 6.6 Further reports will be brought to Board on Start Up Street Renfrew but in the meantime you can view the Start-Up Street premises at this link: https://youtu.be/OHOWV_EBQz0

7. The Start-Up Street Network

- 7.1 All three Start-Up St centres are now open and at 100% occupancy. They are at the early stages of working as a network, supporting each other in the development of the centres and the support to those interested in starting a business.
- 7.2 As well as providing incubation / workspaces each centre also acts as a business hub for start-up and wider business enquiries which can be referred to the Council's Business Team. They each host the Council's Business Gateway 'meet the advisor' sessions and monthly peer group meet up sessions for businesses to network and share best practice.
- 7.3 Several Start-Up Street businesses have employed people from the local area through the Invest in Renfrewshire employability service. In particular, parents returning to work through the parental employability support programme have accessed work experience and employment opportunities.
- 7.4 In support of the Council's aim to strengthen the local supply chain and increase local spend, a number of the Start-Up Street businesses have been given additional support to register on Public Contracts Scotland to enable them to bid for public sector contracts (where this is appropriate).
- 7.5 A Women in Business networking group was successfully launched on the 11th of July 2023 with 22 attendees from across Renfrewshire. The group comprised of a mix of sole traders, limited companies, pre-start individuals and social enterprises. The inaugural speaker at the event was Lesley Compston of KLAS Care Community Interest Company, who was an alumni of the Renfrewshire Women Led Accelerator programme.
- 7.6 The Renfrewshire Women in Business networking events are scheduled monthly for the next 6 months and fall on a Tuesday evening 6pm-8:30pm. Future themes for events will include marketing on a budget, social media that works, building an online presence & websites, business planning for growth and Wellbeing.

8. Further Actions

- 8.1 Future reports will be brought to board to update on progress.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - No additional finance is sought for this proposal.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.

3. **Community/Council Planning** – None.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets**- Start-Up Street currently operates from 43-45 & 65-71 George Street, Paisley and 7 -13 Dunlop Crescent, Renfrew.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**- None.
8. **Health & Safety**- None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk**- None.
11. **Privacy Impact**- None.
12. **Cosla Policy Position**- Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

- Economy and Regeneration Board: 22 September 2022; “Invest In Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street”
- Economy and Regeneration Board: 23 August 2022; “Invest In Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street
- Leadership Board:28 April 2021;“Start-Up Street”
- Leadership Board:5th December 2018; “Invest in Renfrewshire Proposal: Start-Up Street”

Author: Ruth Cooper, Economic Development Manager
ruth.cooper@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Start-Up Street Paisley Update



CENTRE FULL OF YOUNG SUPERSTARS

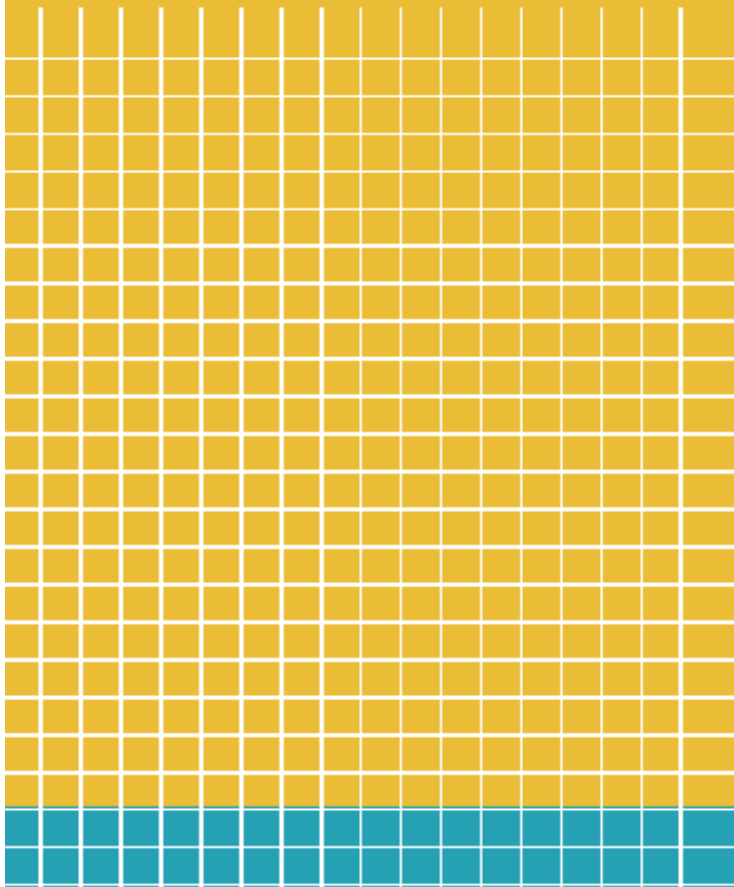
Launch It Paisley Start-Up Street has been a supportive centre for many growing businesses.

At the moment, we have different businesses moving in and out and a waitlist of people hoping to secure units as soon as they're available. **About 70% of our units are rented to businesses** of inspiring individuals under 30 years, which is something we would like to not only continue but increase. This commitment fits with the **values and original focus of Launch It being youth enterprise**, supporting the future of entrepreneurship.

In this report, you will see some of the clients who are part of this vibrant community and where their businesses are currently at. As of June 2023, our building has a 100% occupancy rate.



A SELECTION OF SOME CURRENT TENANTS



CHRISTY AFFLECK

CHRISTY'S LASHES

 @CHRISTYS.LASHES  WWW.CHRISTYS-LASHES.BOOK.APP

Christy has been a client in the centre for around a year and a half now. She started as a lash technician and has now branched out into selling her own products such as lashes and lash glues to the local lash techs in the Paisley area.



LAURA HAMILTON

JUST DIVE

 @JUST.DIVESCOTLAND  WWW.JUST-DIVE.CO.UK

Laura's CIC "Just Dive" has almost finished her two years at Start-Up Street. Just Dive conducts scuba-diving lessons and mermaid themed pool parties. She is due to move out soon and is working with the Business Gateway Growth Team.



MARK SWAROOP

PAISLEY SPICE CO.

 WWW.PAISLEYSPICECO.COM

Mark has opened a new spice blend company called "Paisley Spice Co" which is authentically crafted spice blends. He launched this business at The Paisley Food and Drinks Market and has been expanding ever since.



REBECCA & KATE SEW FITTING GLASGOW



@SEWFITTINGGLASGOW



WWW.SEWFITTINGGLASGOW.BOOK.APP

Rebecca and Kate specialise in bridal, prom dresses and evening wear alterations and customisation. This extremely busy duo is well connected in the industry which has allowed them to build a partnership with a large bridal shop called 'Brides in the City' in Glasgow and any alterations their brides need they are sent to Sew Fittings.



CHRIS & PAUL PAISLEY RADIO

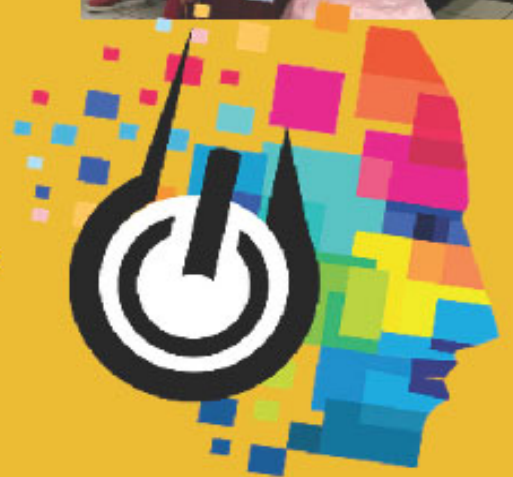


@PAISRADIO



WWW.PAISLEYRADIO.COM

Chris and Paul from Paisley Radio are based in our Centre and continue to do their radio station work from the Centre. They are coming up to a year and a half of being in here and have won multiple different awards.



OUT-OF-CENTRE CLIENTS

It is also worthwhile noting that we are currently working with around **8 out-of-centre clients** who are in the pipeline for a space in the centre. They are pre-start up at the moment and when their business grows and succeeds, the goal is to add them to the waiting list of people wanting a space at Start-Up Street.





LAUNCH IT LEAVERS

Launch It clients are at the very heart of what we do. One of the key things we strive to do is to make our enterprise centres a safe, supportive space they can call home. We want them to find community; a place where they can feel free to live out their entrepreneurial dreams and to thrive.

That is why endings aren't always easy. At the same time, we feel so proud, joyful and excited to see them take it to the next level and start a new journey. And as they do, we will be cheering on, celebrating and supporting them through.

This brief section of the report is one way **we celebrate these talented, inspiring young superstars** and the successful businesses that current tenants are building and the leavers have built.

Indie and Grant are our next tenants to move out – here is what they are planning to do:

GRANT FRASER SWEETPUNKZ

@SWEETPUNKZ

WWW.SWEETPUNKZ.COM

Grant Fraser started his business journey with Launch It Paisley back in March 2021. This driven young man started by selling PicknMix, then branched into international sweets and is now going to expand into the new craze: **freeze-dried candy**.

He has purchased his own machine which will allow him to not only sell them to his customers but also wholesale them to different local shops and newsagents.

In the two years that Grant was with us, he moved into a bigger unit in our centre and changed **from being a sole trader to a limited company all within a year!** He also bought his own customised SweetPunkz van.

Grant has tons of sweet ideas on how his business can expand and we cannot wait to see where he takes it next!

launchit.org.uk



GRANT FRASER SWEETPUNKZ



Grant is still actively trading and growing every month and has **expanded and moved into a 1800sqft warehouse unit** still located in Paisley. He is also hoping to soon take on his first employee. Recently, he also won the **"Inspirational Community Enterprise Award"** at the Renfrewshire Inspirational Awards 2023.

We are extremely proud of how far Grant has come and we can't wait to see where he takes SweetPunkz.



"We are grateful for the help and advice of Launch It, alongside the low cost space with facilities to establish and accelerate SweetPunkz growth at an early stage. Launch It's advice on food standard documentation also helped us gain our first food hygiene pass standard. **Without Launch it, SweetPunkz would never have started!**"

launchit.org.uk



INDIE MCCUE SCOPE



@SCOPE.RENFREWSHIRE



WWW.SCOPE.RENFREWSHIRE.COM

Indie came to Launch It Paisley in August 2021 to explore his dreams of having his own creative arts space in Paisley. The biggest challenge that he faced was finding the ideal space. Now, Indie is moving to the perfect location- a unit the Piazza Shopping Centre which will allow for him to get some fantastic footfall.

Indie has continued to grow and expand his **community interest company** and this new space will allow him to continue to do this in the best way possible.

Here, he will have his monthly Art Chats and an annual creative showcase which highlights the quality of creatives who live and breathe life into Renfrewshire.

We wish Indie all the success in the world and we will be keeping up with him every step of the way.





LAUNCH IT ALUMNI

This section showcases some of the former tenants who have started, grown and built thriving businesses at Start-Up Street. They continue to become part of our community; true inspiration to the next generation of Launch Iters in the area.

JAYNE LASLEY

FAIRLIE CURVED

 @FAIRLIECURVED  WWW.FAIRLIECURVED.COM

Fairlie Curved is a clothing company focused on fuller bust and curve friendly clothing.

Jayne rented out a space at Start-Up Street for two years before she outgrew the space and had to move out. She is currently still trading out of a much larger unit in Inverclyde.

Whilst at Launch It, she also utilised the Ren Council Employability team to assist in taking on her company's first employees. She also used a Renfrewshire Employment Scheme and continued to keep employees on full-time. An inspiration and role model for body positivity, Jayne also won the **Business Woman Scotland Start Up Business of the Year Award**.

JENNY MCDONALD

HONNAN

PURE BARKIN

 @PUREBARKIN  WWW.PUREBARKIN.COM

Jenny has a slow fashion business called "Pure Barkin". She left our space after around 6 months in our spaces to move into a larger space and to also get a stall in the Barras Market in Glasgow where you'll find her every weekend. Jenny is continuing to trade and expand her clothing range.





To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Update 2023-24

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on funding received from Scottish Government to support the delivery of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme in 2023-24.
 - 1.2 An initial allocation of £88,454 was awarded in May 2023 for staff and revenue grants and a further £130,000 for capital support was awarded in July 2023.
 - 1.3 The CLLD programme replaced the EU LEADER programme and operates across designated rural areas in Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and East Renfrewshire.
 - 1.4 Renfrewshire Council is the Accountable Body for the grant award and a community led Local Action Group (LAG) is responsible for allocating resources and prioritising developments.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
 - a) Note the offer and acceptance of grant from Scottish Government to award a total of £218,454 to the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area for the delivery of the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme for 2023/24.

- b) Note the planned use of the grant funding to support a new rural grant programme (capital and revenue) for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Rural Area delivered by the Local Action Group.
-

3. Background: Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme

- 3.1 Following the closure of the EU LEADER (rural) Programme Scottish Government introduced a Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme for rural areas in 2022/23. The geographical rural areas covered by Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) CLLD replicate those same areas covered by the previous EU funded LEADER Programme. Therefore, it encompasses rural areas across Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.
- 3.2 The CLLD Programme supports rural communities to identify and tackle their own challenges through the compilation of a local action plan, developed by a Local Action Group (LAG). The LAG comprises local representatives from the rural areas of all three local authorities.
- 3.3 Extensive work was undertaken over the last 12 months to reinvigorate the composition of the LAG and to gain new community representative members. This led to 7 new members joining, who were also joined by an officer representative from each of the 3 local authority areas. All members, including local authority representatives, are entitled to vote on any proposal.
- 3.4 The LAG was supported to produce a detailed Community Led Vision (CLV) and plan. It was expected that the plan be delivered from April 2023, subject to appropriate funding being available for 2023 / 24 and for future years.

4. CLLD Programme Funding and Proposed Use

- 4.1 Following discussions with Scottish Government GRI LAG were advised on 16 May 2023 they would receive revenue only funding of £88,454 for 2023/24. Approximately £30,000 of this allocation would also have to support the delivery of the programme, including staff costs.
- 4.2 The LAG concluded that this allocation of funding would be insufficient to allow them to deliver the vast majority of the plans developed, with estimated revenue costs of circa £300,000, within their CLV. Instead, the LAG decided to implement a small grants scheme to allow them to utilise funding according to community requests.
- 4.3 The Small Grants Scheme (attached as Appendix 1) is now open for expressions of interest and applications from all community, third sector and SME businesses within the GRI LAG boundary area.
- 4.4 Applicants can apply for revenue funding of up to £5,000 to take forward projects, which meet key criteria as noted on CLLD guidance:

A) Funding is aligned to national priorities. Therefore, Rural Communities should be supported to deliver against these priorities within the context of their own local opportunities and challenges, and should include actions to:

- Support groups and organisations to build connections with the LAG network and the business sector;
- Encourage rural groups and organisations to work in partnership to make positive changes in their communities;
- Collect a body of evidence, insights and learning that will help inform ongoing rural Community Led Local Development policy and programmes.

B) Demonstrate that they advance inclusion, equality and diversity.

C) Align with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#), the [Scottish National Performance Framework](#) and Scottish Government's current spending priorities which include;

- Helping families and services through the cost-of-living crisis
- Eradicating child poverty
- Transforming the economy to deliver net zero
- Creating sustainable public services

D) Focus on delivery of at least one GRI LAG priority. They are as follows:

- To encourage and support rural communities and villages.
- Address Climate Change, assisting in the net zero challenge.
- Increase and sustain local rural businesses, micro businesses and social enterprise.
- Address inclusion, diversity and equality issues – this includes rural poverty including child, elderly, and fuel.
- Create specific opportunities for young people.
- Foster partnership working.

4.5 Scottish Government further advised on 12 July 2023 the LAG would receive an additional allocation of Capital funding of £130,000 to be spent within the current financial year.

4.6 The total allocation of funding for 2023/24 is therefore £218,454. All funds must be spent and accounted for by 31 March 2024.

4.7 Given the tight timescales between the allocation of capital funds and the deadline for spend the LAG decided to implement a Capital Grants Scheme, which mirrored the Small Grants Scheme.

4.8 The Capital Grants Scheme recently opened for expressions of interest and applications from all community, third sector and SME businesses within the GRI LAG boundary area. In Renfrewshire the eligible rural areas are Lochwinnoch, Howwood, Kilbarchan, Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Houston, Linwood, Bishopton and Langbank.

4.9 Applicants can apply for capital funding of between £10,000 and £25,000 to take forward projects which will meet the same criteria as noted in section 4.4. Marketing detail on the grants is provided at Appendix 1.

4.10 A website (www.grilag.com) has also been launched to support ongoing communication with and from the GRI LAG, as well as to support marketing and understanding of any opportunities available, such as those noted above.

5. Future Reporting

5.1 It is proposed that further update reports be provided to Board going forward.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No additional finance is sought. Funding of £218,454 has been allocated by Scottish Government for the 2023-24 period.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – 0.75 FTE posts (across 2 officers) within Economic Development are currently financially supported through CLLD Funds.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Partnership working is essential to the success of the CLLD Programme. Economic Development colleagues from East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils and from the Renfrewshire LEP will be significantly involved in the planning and delivery of programme requirements.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
8. **Health & Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

22/08/22 - Economy and Regeneration Report – GRI LEADER and CLLD Update

Author: Michael Moran, Assistant Economic Development Manager

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Appendix 1: Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group (GRI LAG)

Grant Scheme 1

Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Fund - Small Grants Scheme 2023/24

A **revenue-only** fund has been confirmed to support a range of CLLD activity in 2023/24.

GRI LAG has around £50K to allocate via a small grant scheme for applications between £2,500 - £5,000 for projects which can help address the Scottish Government priority to:

'Help families and services through the cost-of-living crisis'

Grant Scheme 2

Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Fund - Capital Grants Scheme 2023/24

A **capital** fund has been confirmed to support a range of CLLD activity in 2023/24.

GRI LAG has around £130K to allocate via a Capital Grants Scheme for applications between £10,000 - £25,000 for projects which can help address at least one of the current Scottish Government spending priorities, these are:

- **Helping families and services through the cost-of-living crisis**
 - **Eradicating child poverty**
 - **Transforming the economy to deliver net zero**
 - **Creating sustainable public services**
-

All projects **must also assist in the delivery of at least one** GRI LAG priority:

- Encourage and support rural communities and villages
- Address climate change
- Increase and sustain local rural businesses, micro businesses and social enterprises
- Address inclusion, diversity and equality and rural poverty issues (including child poverty, food security and support for working families)
- Create specific opportunities for young people
- Foster partnership working

Applicants must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) via the GRI website (www.grilag.com) **before applying**. An application form will be sent to you if your EOI is approved.

Deadlines for applications is 8th September 2023 and decisions will be made on 27th September 2023

*Approved projects **must be completed, and all funding claimed by 1st March 2024**



To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: No-One Left Behind: Employability Award

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates Board on the most recent funding allocation from the Scottish Government for employability support in Renfrewshire for the 2023-24 period and proposed activities for the year.
 - 1.2 £2.1M of grant funding and £0.371M General Revenue Grant support was awarded in June 2023 under the banner of No-One Left Behind (NOLB) to support an all age employability service and to tackle child poverty.
 - 1.3 Renfrewshire Council is accountable for the resources which are directed and managed through the Renfrewshire Local Employability Partnership.
-

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Board members are asked to:
 - (i) Note the acceptance of Scottish Government grant by the Director of Finance awarded for the 2023-24 period of £2.1M under the banner of No-One Left Behind and the additional award of £0.371M of employability funding through the General Revenue Grant;
 - (ii) Note the ongoing focus and role for the Local Employability Partnership as highlighted in section 4 of the report;

- (iii) Note the attached summary document in Appendix A “Employability Investment Plan 2023-24” providing an overview of the Local Employability Partnership approach for employability services for the next year.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Government and COSLA signed a ‘No One Left Behind’ (NOLB) Employability Partnership Agreement in December 2018 where both agreed to a set of core principles to support the collaboration and collective leadership to shape employability services nationally, whilst designing and delivering support locally.
- 3.2 Employability plays an essential role in delivering both Scottish and local government’s aims of tackling poverty, promoting inclusion and social justice and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland. It is a key component of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), contributing to delivering the vision for a strong economy where good, secure and well-paid jobs and growing businesses have driven a significant reduction in poverty and, in particular, child poverty.
- 3.3 Collectively, Scottish and local government aim to build an employability system that tackles inequalities in Scotland’s labour market by creating a more responsive, joined up and aligned employability system that meets the needs of employers and local labour market and helps people of all ages achieve their potential.
- 3.4 Many individuals face significant challenges and barriers to obtaining and sustaining work: This includes disabled people, those with long-term health conditions, lone parents, homeless people and those from minority ethnic groups. Barriers are also likely to exist and needing to be overcome for young care leavers, ‘new Scots’ / refugees and those in the justice system, meaning there is still a strong demand for employability support.
- 3.5 No One Left Behind promotes a strengthened partnership approach where Scottish and local government are working together with public, private and third sector organisations to identify local needs and deliver a mixed economy of provision.
- 3.6 Local authorities act as lead accountable bodies for funding, with funding being used by Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) to design and deliver services that meet the needs of people and labour markets in their area.
- 3.7 Core principles of No-One Left Behind include:
- Placing people at the centre of the design and delivery of coherent and seamless employability services;
 - Delivering excellent public services and value for money by avoiding duplication and complexity in provision and aligning services to make them seamless, coherent and accessible;

- Collaboratively building on existing local and regional employability partnerships to share and align activities and priorities including partners in the broader public and third sectors; and
- Recognising and building on the strengths of local delivery and good practice around services, delivery models and approaches
- To maximise the role that employability plays in delivering national and local aims of tackling poverty, promoting inclusion and social justice and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland.

4. NOLB Funding 2022-23 and 2023-24

- 4.1 The NOLB grant support for the current year varies significantly from the year before with substantially more funding for parental employment support and less for all age employability;

Investment	2022/2023 Grant Allocation	Focus of Funding	2023/24 Grant Allocation
No One left Behind all age employability services	£502,403.31	Supports Key Workers, staff and programmes of support to priority NOLB groups.	£924,000
25+ LTU labour market opportunities	£750,000.00	Provides funding of £10k per person for 75 paid work placements in the public and third sector.	£0, Long Term Unemployed activity to be incorporated into all age employability service
Young Person's Guarantee	£420,351.53	Supports youth employability programmes and team.	£0, youth activity incorporated into all age employability service
Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF)	£271,508.99	Supports an employability team to work directly with unemployed or low income parents and funding for services.	£1,176,000 grant + £371k General Revenue Grant
TOTAL	£1,944,263.83		£2,471,000

- 4.2 The additional funding for parents has necessitated a review of the service offer and a significant scaling up of activities for some target groups. New posts have been appointed (in part through conditions of the grant) and new commissioned services are now in place. There is a hard stop to the funding at 31st March 2024 when it is hoped that a further grant award will be in place, at a similar level, to continue the support.

- 4.3 As reported to Board last year, there is now a specific role for Local Employability Partnerships (LEP) in the development and management of employability services at a local level. Renfrewshire Council retains the overall accountability for the Scottish Government funding award with decisions made locally through the LEP. The Renfrewshire LEP is well established and operates with the needs of clients at the centre. Strategic employability partners are all well represented on the management group (DWP, SDS, WCS, DYW West, Engage Renfrewshire, NHS GGC, Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce and Renfrewshire Council) and numerous other organisations and services are involved in the various thematic groups. There is additional reporting from the LEP to the Community Planning Partnership on an annual basis.
- 4.4 A key component of the LEP approach is to commission locally required services through an Employability Grants programme. The process was approved at Leadership Board in September 2021 and has also been used to commission Shared Prosperity Funding for both the People and Skills and Multiply programmes. A list of the current commissioned provision is contained in the Appendix A under the section titled "*LEP Co-commissioned provision for unemployed people in Renfrewshire*".
- 4.5 A key element of the co-commissioning is to ensure that the wider private and third sector employability partners continue to be supported to deliver key elements of the employability pipeline with co-ordination of service requirements via the LEP and the Council.

5. Local Investment Plan, Renfrewshire, 2023-24

- 5.1 Public sector funding for employability services, whether from the Council, Scottish Government, EU or Shared Prosperity Fund, relates to those most in need of support.
- 5.2 Statutory employability services through DWP are available to offer support to those looking for work. These services work well for those who have potentially just lost a job and are looking for the next one, where they have experience and skills to call on and where a light touch support is all that is required. DWP offer a range of services but refer those who need more intensive support to the Council's Invest in Renfrewshire Employability Service, based at the Russell Institute.
- 5.3 The Invest in Renfrewshire Employability Service supports over 1,500 unemployed people each year who have particular barriers to employment. This could be different barriers eg: that they are very long term unemployed; have a health condition or disability; have no prior qualifications or work experience; have a past criminal record; are care experienced, and so require a supportive and longer-term service to move them forward in the labour market.

- 5.4 The Invest in Renfrewshire Employability Service is the primary non statutory employability service in the area, providing a key worker to every client, a range of developmental opportunities to improve core skills and confidence, personal and health support services, vocational skills and work experience opportunities, a personal support fund, help with CVs and job interviews and up to a year of support after entering work.
- 5.5 The commissioned services provide a range of special supports and opportunities that work alongside the Invest in Renfrewshire service to ensure a co-ordinated and integrated offer for all clients.
- 5.6 Appendix A of this report provides an extract from the Investment Plan, developed by the LEP, outlining the key services available in Renfrewshire for the 2023-24 period. Funding comes from a range of sources including Renfrewshire Council, LACER programme, NOLB, Child Poverty funding and Shared Prosperity Fund.

6. Update on 2022-23 Targets and Outcomes

- 6.1 2022-23 was a busy year for the Council’s Employability Service and local partners. In total 1,789 people received an employability service. 419 people were already engaged in the previous year and continued to be supported in the new financial year and 1,370 people were new registrations in 22-23.
- 6.2 Of the 1,789, 62% were male and 38% were female. The age profile is outlined below.

Age category	Number	%
15-17	133	7%
18-19	201	11%
20-24	358	20%
25-40	602	34%
41-50	219	12%
51-54	89	5%
55-64	167	9%
Over 65	20	1%

- 6.3 During the year 507 people achieved qualification, 40 moved into full time further or higher education and 560 clients moved directly into work during their period of support.
- 6.4 Appendix B provides some case studies as examples of work from the last year and also highlights the current “better off in work” campaign to promote employment.
- 6.5 Further reports on employability services and No-One Left Behind will be brought to future Boards at appropriate times.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the report outlines the grant award from Scottish Government for 2023-24 and the breakdown of funding to support employability services in Renfrewshire.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – the funding supports a range of posts within the Economic Development Team (Invest in Renfrewshire Employability Service) and there is regular liaison with HR around staff posts.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – The Renfrewshire LEP reports to the Community Planning Partnership and all key strategic partners are represented on the LEP.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** - None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**- None.
8. **Health & Safety**- None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk**- None.
11. **Privacy Impact**- None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position**- Employability funding from Scottish Government to all local authorities is reported and agreed through the COSLA SDG group and employability services are reported to the Community Wellbeing Board.

List of Background Papers

Economy and Regeneration Board 14th June 2022; Employability Funding: No-One Left Behind

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APPENDIX A – Service Delivery Requirements and Approach Template

Target Group	Rationale for Intervention	Delivery Partners	Budget	Volumes	Delivery Method	Outcome Expected
<p>All Age employability service for unemployed people in Renfrewshire with barriers to getting into work. Some of the staff team have specific target groups to work with (eg parents , care experienced, ex-offenders, leaving school, disabled.</p>	<p>Service is for those who lack skills, confidence, prior work experience and require support in order to prepare for and find employment. Referrals are either from the Job Centre (or other partner) or self referral.</p>	<p>Core service is delivered by Renfrewshire Council Economic Development (known as Invest in Renfrewshire). The majority of people will also be engaging with the job centre and a number with SDS.</p>	<p>£2,465,000</p>	<p>1500 people per year receive a full service. This is usually around 300 people registered previously or just the year before plus 1,200 new clients. An additional 400 or so will enquire and have a meeting about the service but wont engage. Another 500+ will be supported through events such as jobs fayres etc but will not be clients.</p>	<p>Delivered via Council employability staff. This is effectively a one-stop-shop for all things employability. The service registers, assesses and provides an action plan for every person. The service offers every person a Key Worker, access to personal supports, a better off in work calculation, a needs assessment and action plan, access to a wide range of training and groupwork, work experience, sector based work academies etc. For some target groups with particular barriers (eg ex-offenders) then a discrete stage 1-2 service works with clients in the first stages where staff are very experienced in the particular barriers being faced. As the clients progress along the pipeline then they will join in wider stage 3-4 provisions as they progress towards employment and the initial barriers are being addressed.</p>	<p>1500 people supported, around 1000 will become job ready within the year and a minimum of 500 into work</p>

<p>Personal Training Fund for All unemployed and low waged workers (UC claimants)</p>	<p>A personal training fund of up to £3,500 to purchase training and certifications for work. Amounts vary from around £100 for (eg) first aid training to £3.5k for offshore training.</p>	<p>all training providers. Places are purchased for clients on an individual basis / preference.</p>	<p>£150,000</p>	<p>supporting 150-300 people depending on value of training</p>	<p>Clients can apply to the Council employability service who then book and pay for the training. Any partner can refer an individual for support.</p>	<p>150-300 people benefiting with the majority receiving certification for training.</p>
<p>Parental welfare Fund: Parents currently unemployed but who secure employment and require support.</p>	<p>Parental Welfare Fund offers £1,000 to unemployed parents looking to move into work to support the first 3 months where additional financial support is required.</p>	<p>The fund will be administered by the Invest in Renfrewshire Team</p>	<p>£180,000</p>	<p>180 people getting £1000 support</p>	<p>For Parents supported through PESF services.</p>	<p>180 people will benefit.</p>
<p>Client support fund to offer travel, lunches, clothing, training allowances, driving lessons etc to clients</p>	<p>A general fund to offer day to day required supports. This includes clothes for work, travel cards, lunch vouchers, youth training allowances etc</p>	<p>The fund will be administered by the Invest in Renfrewshire Team</p>	<p>£210,000</p>	<p>up to 1500 people will be supported in some way</p>	<p>referral for support through client advisors working with the client.</p>	<p>up to 1500 people will benefit</p>
<p>Creating paid traineeships and new posts (ERI) for target groups</p>						

Parents	Part time and full time opportunities for parents in the public and third sectors	Public sector and voluntary sector employers	£350,000	35 -40 parents into paid work experience	Unemployed parents working with the PESF team and referred for a position to gain skills, experience and paid employment	35-40 people secure employment
People with complex disabilities	paid opportunities for people with disabilities in any sector	employers in public, private or third sector	£100,000	10 new places, 10 already on programme	Disabled people referred by a LEP partner to the Disability co-ordinator	10 people secure employment
Ukrainian refugees	6 month paid work with council depts supporting other Ukrainian refugees	council depts supporting all Ukrainians	£60,000	6 new places, 11 already on the programme	referral for support through client advisors working with the client.	6 new places, 11 already getting support
Unemployed people	NETs and Council traineeship programme	Council depts supporting unemployed people to secure traineeships with the aim of moving into employment	£150,000	15-20 places	referral for support through client advisors working with the client.	15-20 unemployed people moving into employment
Parental ERI	Employer recruitment incentive to develop a range of part time , school hour posts for parents looking to return to work	private and third sector employers	£50,000	15-20 places	referral for support through client advisors working with the client.	15-20 people securing employment

TBC additional ERIs	£200k allocated from additional resources to ERIs at LEP Meeting on 20/6/23	tbc	£200,000	tbc	tbc	tbc
LEP Co-commissioned provision for unemployed people in Renfrewshire						
Step 2 Work	Demand for stage 2 provision for young people.	Barnardos	£62,000	28	13 weeks group work including tasters/work experience and qualifications	26 young people achieve a qualification; 12 progress into work and 4 into apprenticeships; 6 into further training education course 1year or over and 3 under 1 year.
Connected	Demand for stage 2 provision for young people.	Street league	£62,000	28	12 weeks group work including tasters/work experience and qualifications	22 young people achieve a qualification; 8 progress into work , 2 into apprenticeships; 6 into further training education course
Hospitality and Tourism school	Demand for stage 2 provision for young people.	Hub International	£30,000	28	6 week stage2/3 group work; tasters and work experience; qualifications	20 young people achieve a qualification; 14 progress into work and 2 into apprenticeships; 4 into further training education course 1year

						or over and 2 under 1 year.
YES (Criminal Justice)	Demand for stage 2 provision for people with criminal convictions	West College Scotland/ Invest	£12,416	20	8 weeks group work - employability skills	16 people achieve a qualificaton; 4 progress into work; 2 into MA; 6 into further training/education course; 2 into formal volunteering opportunity
Labyrinth	Demand for specialist all stage support for sex offenders unable to be provided through mainstream provision	APEX	£58,649	20	26 week programme - all stage including work experience and qualifications. Mainly 1:1 support.	14 people achieve a qualificaton; 8 progress into work; 1 into further training/education course 4 into formal volunteering opportunity
YES (Women)	Demand for stage 2 for vulnerable/unemployed women	West College Scotland/Invest	£12,416	20	8 weeks group work - employability skills	16 people achieve a qualificaton; 4 progress into work; 2 into MA; 6 into further training/education course; 2 into formal volunteering opportunity

Invent Your Future	new focus on economically inactive/parents requires a new approach to building motivation and engagement to help prepare for further training/employment support.	Glasgow Clyde College	£5,304	30	short groupwork programme using Pacific Institute licenced programme and facilitators	Improved confidence, self esteem and motivation to engage with employability support. 3 into further training/education course of 1 years or more and 18 into course for less than 1 year.
Specialise in Security	Changes in legislation requires increasing the skills and licensing of security personnel. This is driving increasing wages and demand for training.	VERG	£36,095	36	4 week vocational programme	36 people achieve a qualification,18 people into work or improved labour market position.
Construction - the basics	Continues demand for CSCS/health and Safety training and qualifications.	VERG	£21,291	40	2 week vocational programme	40 people achieve a qualification,20 people progress into work; 4 into apprenticeships; 4 into further education/training course less than 1 year.
Warehousing and forklift	Programme developed following recent increase in warehousing roles with forklift certificate in the area.	GTG	£22,000	18	5 week vocational programme	18 people achieve a qualification, 14 progress into work and 4 into an apprenticeship;

LGV driving	Ongoing skills shortage area and high demand for training	GTG	£42,626	15	10 week vocational programme	11 people achieve a qualification and 11 progress into work
Caring Essentials	Ongoing skills shortage area	CEIS Ayrshire	£13,186	10	10 week vocational programme	10 people achieve a qualification and 6 into jobs
Progress for Parents	Demand for specialist employment support for disabled parents or parents with a disabled child	Enable	£79,146	35	up to 52 weeks, stages 2-5	21 parents achieve a qualification; 16 progress into work; 7 progress onto a training /educational course;
First Steps to Work - Parents	Demand for stage 2/3 provision for parents. Key aspect of our Child Poverty offer	Barnardos	£25,185	20	8 week group work including tasters/work experience. Childcare provided and inclusion of driving lessons for participants where appropriate	16 parents achieve a qualification; 6 progress into work; 3 into further training/education course of 1 yr + and 4 into a course less than 1 yr.
Empowering Parents	Significant numbers of low income/unemployed or inactive parents are not engaging with employability services and the LEP needs to work with key local partners to increase awareness, interest and engagement	Homestart	£10,036	32	programme currently in design, working with parents engaged with Homestart.	Still in design stage

Parent Student Support	Higher levels of college drop out rates for parents. Increased study for parents will increase earning potential	West College Scotland	£35,271	50	1:1 support and groupwork via a new parent student support post.	increased student engagement and sustainment
Self Employment Support	ongoing demand for self employment support	BDA	£44,400	20	Support to develop ,test ,establish and sustain self employment.	16 people progress into self employment/employment.
Triple E	Demand for specialist employment support for disabled parents or parents with a disabled child	VIAS	£80,230	20	Supported employment programme 20weeks +	5 people achieve qualifications; 15 progress into employment and 4 into modern apprenticeships.
ESOL for Employment	very high unmet demand for ESOL from job seekers including Ukrainian refugees.	West College Scotland	£18,480	48		42 people achieve a qualification; 21 progress into employment; 9 onto a training/FE/HE course 1 year + and 12 into courses less than a year.
Additional LEP programmes, not yet commissioned (agreed 20/6/23 due to additional funding received)						
16-24 yrs provision	Demand for Stage 3 provision and more youth provision generally required	tb commissioned	£150,000	tbc	tbc	progression into further training; FE/HE , volunteering or employment

People requiring mental health support	DATA from front line services	tb commissioned	£100,000	tbc	tbc	Improved mental health and ability to engage with and progress towards/sustain employment
Additional support for people with criminal convictions	Thematic group has identified that additional supports may be required. £50k funding from additional funding allocated.	tb agreed and commissioned	£50,000	tbc	tbc	tbc
condition management service for those with poor mental health.		tbc after procurement	£80,000			

APPENDIX B – Employability Case Studies 2022-23

<p>Who – tell us about the participant (age, area, etc. - names can be changed) Line of delivery. Participants employability aim.</p>	<p>Parental Employment Support Fund – Case Study Jean is a lone parent claiming JSA. She lives in a private let with her 2 children (13yr old daughter and 7yr old son). Since the age of 15, Jean has suffered from mental health issues: depression and anxiety. She is not able to cope in large crowds, gets overwhelmed and begins to panic in certain situations. She is not on any medication but is also being tested for sleep apnoea as she stops breathing while asleep.</p> <p>Jean was interested in work but her main concern was coming off benefits. The transition from benefits to employment is a concern for a number of parents. To reassure Jean, we explained that we would conduct a Better Off In Work Calculation which will allow her to see how much better off in work she would be, looking at different hours of work, where she would be entitled to stay on, or receive, any other benefits.</p>
<p>Barriers Identified</p>	<p>Low confidence, Lack of experience, No relevant work experience, Clothing for interviews , In work benefit calculation, Employability skills, CV, application & interview skills , Lack of I.T. skills, Unsure of job goals</p>
<p>Impact – how has the participant changed or moved forward that would not have been the case without the support.</p>	<p>Invest in Renfrewshire supported Jean with all aspects of employability, CV, applications and interview skills, support form health & wellbeing where she was able to manage her mental health, signposted Jean to volunteering roles, conducted an in-work benefit calculation. Looked at Jean’s transferrable skills, interests & hobbies, what she likes doing etc to help determine a future career path.</p> <p>Jean accessed a full support service; attended our YES course, employability workshops, health & wellbeing workshops etc Jean is a completely new person, much more confident and is not scared of trying something new, has moved out of her comfort zone.</p>

<p>What outcomes has the participant achieved (including soft skills, any milestones, qualifications etc).</p>	<p>Jean participated in all activities within Invest, employability workshops, YES course, health & wellbeing workshops, I.T. skills and a few sector specific sessions for Care and Retail. West College Scotland were commissioned to deliver the YES course and also the Routes to Employability course that Jean attended.</p> <p>As Jean had been out of the labour market for a long period, it was beneficial for her to attend our Living Life to the Full (LLTTF) workshop provided by our Health & Wellbeing Advisor. This helped to equip Jean with the life skills aimed at empowering and dealing with life's challenges; explore activities to improve wellbeing; boost confidence; manage anxieties; increase assertiveness and promote self-care routines.</p> <p>Jean attended a Careers Event and spoke to one of the employers in Care and was invited for interview and secured the role. Jean is now working 20hrs a week as a Care Assistant, where she is getting on-the-job training and is able to work around her children. Jean was over the moon when she was offered the job.</p>
<p>Quote from participant – their views on the support offered and outcome achieved?</p>	<p><i>"When I first started with Invest in Renfrewshire, I didn't know what I wanted to do, I had no experience or anything. They have helped me so much with not only looking for work but building my confidence and I'm a better person now thanks to them. I'm now working, and I love it, I couldn't have done it on my own."</i></p>

<p>Who – tell us about the participant (age, area, etc. - names can be changed) Line of delivery</p>	<p>NOLB – Case Study Finlay registered with Invest having been unemployed for over 6 months and was struggling to find work. He had also picked up a conviction which he felt was holding him back and was unsure how to disclose. He was hoping to get some direction on what career to do and to build up his confidence.</p>
<p>Barriers Identified</p>	<p>Barrier: Criminal Conviction Due to his conviction Finlay had moved house on several occasions and had spent some time as homeless. As a result, he had no ID documents, lack of confidence in himself and a lack of direction/ structure to what his next steps would be.</p>

<p>Impact – how has the participant changed or moved forward that would not have been the case without the support. What support has the participant received? (training /learning participation etc.)</p>	<p>Finlay registered with the Renfrewshire Invest Employability Service and started with individual appointments with his adviser to gain his ID, young Scot card. The service offers specialist support to those with a criminal conviction with 2 advisors trained to support people in that situation.</p> <p>He was also referred to partners at SDS to help him to start looking at possible career choices. Following his one to one's with his Advisor, it was decided the best way forward was for Finlay to have some increased structure to his day, more personal support and development and to consider different vocational options before commencing any employment. College was an option Finlay was interested in but he wasn't sure whether it would be for him or not.</p> <p>Finlay agreed that a short part-time college course would be a good start and he was referred onto the criminal convictions YES programme as a starting point. This was so Finlay could experience what college was like before considering or committing to a full-time programme.</p>
<p>What outcomes has the participant achieved (including soft skills, any milestones, qualifications etc).</p>	<p>Finlay successfully completed the YES programme and decided that college was the right option for him. He then applied and was accepted onto a full time NPA course in Electrical Engineering which he is currently studying and hopes to secure employment in this sector when his course is finished.</p> <p>SDS, advice works, Housing Services and West College Scotland were all involved at different points of Finlay's journey.</p>
<p>Quote from participant – their views on the support offered and outcome achieved?</p>	<p><i>"I really benefited from the service, I enjoyed myself on the YES programme, I was given advice about my benefits, I was offered training and now have the confidence to disclose in the future".</i></p>

Current Campaign “Better Off in Work” featuring 8 real case studies with photos and the 2 graphics below.

Each case study relates to both being financially better off as well as increased wellbeing, greater confidence, better opportunities etc.



*I am still
in receipt
of Benefit*

**IN WORK
I'M BETTER OFF
£141.89 A WEEK**
Paul a Lone Parent of 2 children



*I am still
in receipt
of Benefit*

**IN WORK
I'M BETTER OFF
£148.54 A WEEK**
Rachael a Lone Parent with children aged 3 & 4

