EAST RENFREWSHIRE CORE PATHS PLAN

July 2012

Written Statement

East Renfrewshire Council

Planning Property and Regeneration

East Renfrewshire
Core Paths Plan
July 2012

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East Renfrewshire Draft Core Paths Plan

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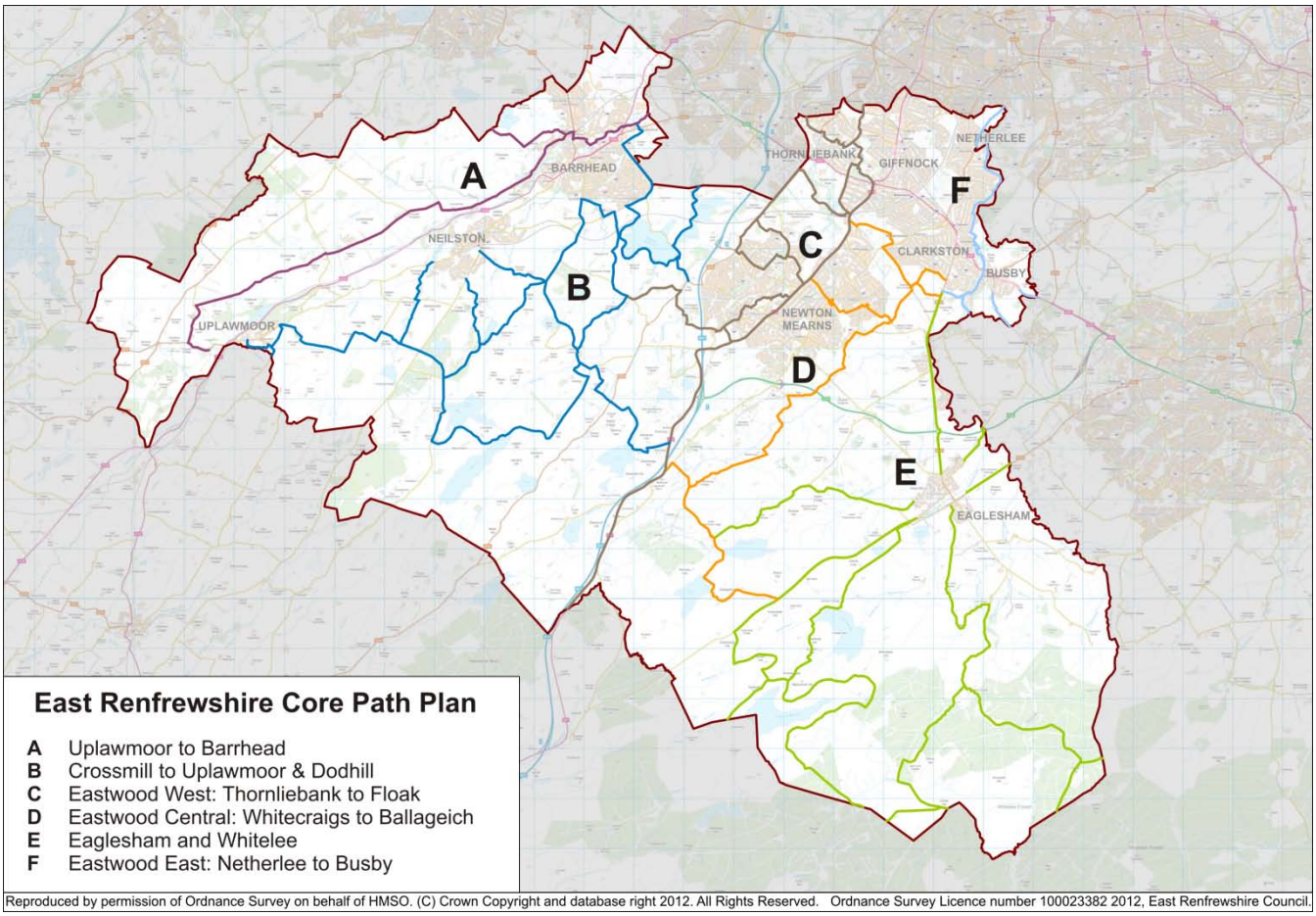
Introduction and Overview

"Walking is man's best medicine" Hippocrates, circa 410 BC



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East Renfrewshire's Core Paths Plan identifies a network of paths that connect communities and gives everyone the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors.

The legislation establishing the Core Paths Plan is The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Act establishes a statutory right of non-motorised access to most land and water in Scotland. The Act allows for walking, cycling, horse-riding and all other forms of non-motorised access, provided these rights are exercised responsibly. The Act also requires land managers to recognise access rights and to manage their land and water responsibly in relation to these rights. Although the Act establishes a right of responsible access across most land the majority of people prefer to use paths.

For more information on the Act and the supporting Scottish Outdoor Access Code please visit www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

What is the Core Paths Plan?

The Core Paths Plan provides the basic framework of path routes:

''*..sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout their area. This basic network will link into and support wider paths" Land Reform Scotland Act Section 17.*

The Core Paths Plan is a 146 km (91 mile) network of established routes. The plans also show a further 7 km (4.5 miles) of aspirational routes which require some degree of development. The network as a whole will provide opportunities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders of all ages and abilities. The two accompanying maps show the paths in detail.

Core paths have a key role in providing for outdoor access and activities. They enable both the promotion of outdoor recreation and the reduction in possible conflicts between the needs of land managers and those of access users.

What type of paths are core paths?

There are 83 established core paths. Most routes start and finish near where people live. The majority of the network (90%) utilises well established paths including rights of way, minor public roads and cycle lanes. Types of path include:

- natural grass and beaten earth paths through fields, woods and by river banks
- surfaced paths and tracks
- quiet minor public roads and pavements

Core paths were selected for being “fit for purpose” meaning routes are of a standard appropriate for the anticipated users and location. A safe route to school fulfils a different function for a different customer than a path on remote moorland. Path users will find that over time core paths are fitted with the most accessible type of gate or fence crossing appropriate for the location. To help people find their way all core paths will eventually be signposted and popular routes may have guides published to promote them.

In time the Ordnance Survey will include core paths on their national maps.

A number of existing rights of way have been adopted as core paths but not every right of way satisfied the selection criteria. Nor do the plans record or show every path in the district.

How core paths contribute to the East Renfrewshire Single Outcome Agreement

- Core paths will help the Council achieve the following core outcomes:
- Our local people are healthier, more active and inequalities in health are reduced
- Our local people live in an attractive natural and built environment that is sustainable and enhanced for future generations
- East Renfrewshire residents have easier access to key services via sustainable modes of transport.

How will core paths benefit our communities, farmers and land managers?

The majority of households will be no more than 5 minutes walk from a core path. When using a core path people can enjoy walking and cycling between communities and to their local facilities.

Core paths can be used for both local and longer distance commuting helping to reduce traffic congestion and pollution by providing realistic opportunities to make journeys on foot or by bike.

Core paths provide opportunities for uncomplicated everyday physical exercise. Thirty minutes of walking five times a week can protect against heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some types of cancers.

It is hoped that the core paths will encourage tourism opportunities by bringing visitors to the area.

Well planned and managed paths can support our land managers and farmers by proactively managing access to the countryside helping to minimise conflicts of interest.

What is the relationship between core paths and other paths?

While only those paths identified in the plans have been adopted as core paths other paths are still important as local routes. Core paths link up with these other routes to form a strong network that covers the whole district.

Access rights extend beyond the use of formalised paths. There is also a right of general access under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and a right of historical linear access on Public Rights of Way protected by Section 46 of the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967. Outdoor access within East Renfrewshire can, therefore, be considered on three overlapping and interlocking levels:

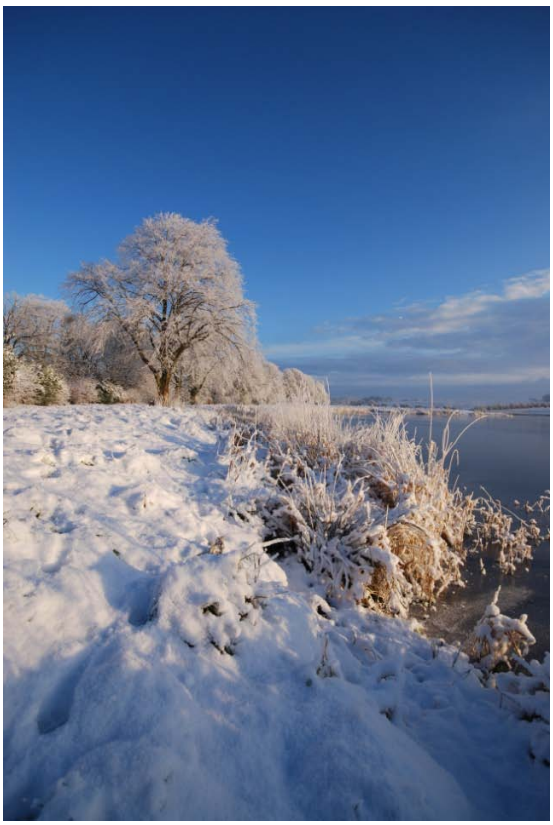
- a general area wide right of access
- access on the wider path network including public rights of way
- access on core paths which provide the basic district wide network

The designation of a route as a core path does not provide any enhanced right of access, except where a core path is established on land were access rights are not otherwise exercisable e.g. across a sports or a playing field.

Developing the Core Paths Plan

Working in partnership

To create a meaningful network of core paths it was important to involve as many interested parties and stakeholders as possible in the development process. The development of the Core Paths Plan was guided initially by path planning studies which included one to one meetings with landowners, staffed open-days and public meetings. The development of the preliminary Candidate and subsequent Draft Core Paths Plan involved a series of one-to-one meetings. These involved stakeholders, professional officers from both within the Council and from external organisations, and also members of the East Renfrewshire Outdoor Access Forum.



East Renfrewshire Outdoor Access Forum

In order to achieve a balanced and inclusive Core Paths Plan the core group of the Outdoor Access Forum has actively contributed to this document. The Outdoor Access Forum will continue to be involved in future reviews and modifications.

Established in 2001 the Forum consists of a Full Forum of approximately forty members with a direct interest in land management or outdoor access and a Core Group of eight representatives who meet regularly and carry out the ‘core’ business of the Forum.

The Forum consists of a balanced membership of land manager interests, outdoor activity organisations, community interests and public agencies. This balance is also reflected in the membership of the Forum’s Core Group.

Key Selection Criteria

10 criteria were used to screen the suitability of paths for inclusion in the plans. Core paths:

1. Link communities and provide cross-boundary links between local authorities
2. Link urban areas to the surrounding countryside
3. Link with the wider path network
4. Link to community facilities or transport nodes
5. Provide opportunities for health benefits
6. Provide opportunities for multi-use and by all abilities - subject to natural limitations
7. Respect or reduce impacts on land management and business
8. Provide a functional component or a circular route within the wider core path network
9. Are sustainable, achievable and take into account resource availability
10. Are available for public use within 24 months of the Core Paths Plan being adopted

Stage 1: Path audit and assessment

The first stage audited all paths starting with the compilation and digitisation of path information held by the Council and other organisations. Once digitised paths were tested against the selection criteria and those routes that satisfied the majority of criteria were identified as candidate core paths.

The key selection criteria relating to resource availability and delivery of the core path routes within 24 months were an important part of this screening process. Where it was uncertain or unlikely that a proposed new route could be delivered either within 24 months or within resource availability then the new route was not included. New paths may of course be needed and developed and where these meet the selection criteria there is always the possibility of their future inclusion as core paths within subsequent reviews of the Plan.

Stage 2: preliminary consultation

The preliminary consultation document the Candidate Core Paths Plan was published in March 2008. 60 representations were received with a total of 251 specific comments. The representation feedback resulted in a review which saw 14 paths deleted while 33 new paths links were identified. Negotiations with land owners resulted in 10 alternative routes and 3 minor diversions to the line of paths being agreed.

Stage 3: formal consultation

The formal consultation on the Draft Core Paths Plan concluded in September 2010 with a total of 15 representations received including 6 formal objections. 5 objections were resolved following negotiation resulting in minor modifications to the Plan. The single remaining objection was subject to Public Inquiry in February 2012. The Reporter recommended that the objection be upheld and the Scottish Ministers endorsed the Reporters decision resulting in 3 paths being deleted from the finalised plan. The Council adopted the Core Paths Plan in June 2012.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

An SEA provides a systematic process for identifying, predicting, reporting and mitigating the environmental impacts of a proposed plan, programme or strategy. Following a screening exercise it was established that the Core Paths Plan did require an SEA. Following consultation an Environmental Report has been produced to accompany this document. The Report can be viewed on the Council's website.

The SEA process played an important part in developing the Core Paths Plan and has ensured that environmental considerations have been taken into account during the development process.

Delivering the Core Paths Plan

The Council and partners will work towards making core paths fit for purpose. In particular all paths will in time be sign posted. Where paths are shown as aspirational and agreement can be obtained with the landowner works to create or improve them to a suitable standard will be undertaken when funding is available. Funding for these works will have to be identified but it is envisaged that work will be phased over a number of years.

Public roads and pavements have been identified as core paths where they provide important links in the network are already well used and no suitable off-road alternative could be identified. Guidance from national agencies is that roads designated as core paths should be accompanied by relevant safety measures such as reduced speed limits, traffic calming, cycle lanes and signage etc. The Council will work towards off-road alternatives for a future review of the Core Paths Plan.

Maintenance of the Core Paths network

Our objective is to achieve a popular and well maintained and managed network of core paths, which are signposted, barrier free, inspected regularly and kept in a condition fit for purpose. In order to achieve this objective it will be necessary to work in partnership with others, including public and private landowners.

East Renfrewshire Council already manages and maintains many of the proposed core paths. In addition, a number of core paths are maintained by public organisations, including the Forestry Commission and Scottish Water. Where an existing path in private ownership becomes a core path existing arrangements for managing and maintaining the path will continue. Core path status will not change ownership or management responsibilities. However, the Council will seek to work with owners to improve existing paths in the interest of both the owner and users.

Keeping the Core Paths Plan under review

It is a requirement of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 that the Core Paths Plan is subject to periodic review. It is envisaged

that this first Plan will be reviewed within 5 years of adoption.

The adoption of the first East Renfrewshire Core Paths Plan is seen as the start of a core path planning process which will evolve and develop over the coming years. As new paths are created they will be monitored and considered for inclusion within the core path network during future reviews.

Using the Core Path Plan Maps

Proposed core paths are mapped on the two accompanying A1 size plans. The first plan is at a scale of 1:30,000 and covers the entire authority area. The second plan is at a scale of 1:12,500 and provides greater detail on the urban areas of East Renfrewshire.

There are 89 core paths shown on the plans; 83 established routes and 6 aspirational routes. All the core paths are listed in Annex 1 along with the name of each individual section. The paths are numbered according to their location. The letter denotes the area the path is located and is followed by an identifying number.

Core paths are shown using the standard national symbol: a broken purple line. Where the path is aspirational and requires some agreement / construction / improvement to make it fully fit for use, a dotted purple line is used.

	core path
	Aspirational core path

Annex 1: List of Core Paths

Path Area Location Area

A Uplawmoor to Barrhead
B Crossmill to Uplawmoor & Dodhill; including Dams to Darnley CP
C Eastwood: Thornliebank to Floak
D Eastwood: Flenders & Whitecraigs to Ballageich
E Eaglesham and Whitelee
F Eastwood: Netherlee to Busby

Path Number Area A: Uplawmoor to Barrhead

A1 Graham Street to Fereneze Braes
A2 Barrhead Station to Crossmill by Carlibar Park
A3 Levern Way: Glasgow Road to Bowerwalls
A4 Barrhead Station to Thorterburn Farm
A5 Corkindale Law to Greenside
A6 Greenside to Caldwell Lodge

Area B: Crossmill to Uplawmoor & Dodhill; including Dams to Darnley CP

B1 Cowan Park: Tower Rais to Aurs Road
B2 Aurs Road: Cowan Park to Dams to Darnley
B3 Dams to Darnley: Springfield Road to Balgrayston Road
B4 Dams to Darnley: Balgrayston Road to Waulkmill Glen
B5 Aspirational: Aurs Road link
B6 St Lukes HS to Fingalton Bridge
B7 Aurs Glen: Springfield Road to Springhill Road
B8 Springhill Road to Kirkton Road
B9 Springhill Road to Craigton Road
B10 Fingalton Mill to North Craigton
B11 Aspirational: Fingalton Mill
B12 Craigton Road to Dodside Road
B13 Brother Loch to Dodside Road
B14 Aspirational: Brother Loch to Ayr Road
B15 Craigton to Moyne Farm
B16 Springhill Road to Snypes Dam
B17 Neilston Pad: Neilston to Kingston Road
B18 Moyne Farm to Neilston Pad
B19 Neilston Pad to Uplawmoor
B20 Meadowside to Brimstone Bridge
B21 Castburn Path
B22 Pollick Glen
B23 Tannoch Road to Newlands Bridge

Area C: Eastwood - Thornliebank to Floak

C1 Addison Avenue to Library Lane
C2 Library Lane to Woodfarm High School
C3 Woodfarm High School to Burnfield Road
C4 Woodfarm High School to Eastwood Toll by Eastwood Park
C5 Eastwood Park to Woodfarm Road
C6 Woodfarm Road to Davieland Road
C7 Rouken Glen: Davieland Road to Stewarton Road
C8 Stewarton Road: Jenny Lind to Crookfur
C9 Eastwood HS to Stewarton Road
C10 Ayr Road to Capelrig Road via Fruin
C11 Capelrig Woods: Capelrig Bridge to Warnock Road

Path Number Area C: Eastwood - Thornliebank to Floak

C12 Capelrig Woods to Warnock Road
C13 Ayr Road: Eastwood Toll to Floak
C14 Crookfur Recreation Grounds
C15 Mearns Park: Capelrig Road to Barrhead Road
C16 Barrhead Road to Netherplace Road
C17 Netherplace Road to Fingalton Bridge
C18 Ayr Road to Netherplace Road

Area D: Eastwood - Flenders & Whitecraigs to Ballageich

D1 Cathcart Castle Golf Club: The Loaning to Club House
D2 Greenbank to Newford Road by Flenders
D3 Flenders to Hillend
D4 Hillend to Eaglesham Road
D5 King Henry's Knowe to Flenders by Barrance
D6 Broom Road to Barrance Farm
D7 Broom Road to Mearns Road
D8 Mearns Road to Ayr Road
D9 King Henry's Knowe to Waterfoot Road
D10 Waterfoot Road to Humbie Bridge
D11 Humbie Bridge to Hazeldean
D12 Hazeldean to Blackhouse
D13 Aspirational: Blackhouse to North Moorhouse
D14 North Moorhouse to Muirshield Bridge
D15 Eastwood Golf course to South Moorhouse
D16 South Moorhouse to Ballageich

Area E: Eaglesham and Whitelee

E1 Moor Road: Eaglesham to Queens Seat
E2 Eaglesham to Dunwan Dam
E3 Aspirational: Whitelee: Dunwan Dam to Dunwan Hill
E4 Dunwan Hill to Blackwood Hill
E5 Whitelee: Visitor Centre to Council boundary at Flow Moss
E6 Whitelee: Topfaulds Hill to Council boundary at Craigenfaulds
E7 Eaglesham to Carrot
E8 Whitelee: Carrot to Myres Hill
E9 Aspirational: Myres Hill to Crook Hill
E10 Whitelee: Crook Hill to Council boundary
E11 Whitelee: Carrot to Corse Hill
E12 Whitelee: Corse Hill to Council boundary
E13 Cheapside to Kirkland Bridge
E14 Eaglesham Cemetery to council boundary
E15 Eaglesham to Busby
E16 Eaglesham to South Moorhouse

Area F: Eastwood - Netherlee to Busby

F1 Eaglesham Road to Main Street, Busby
F2 Williamwood Sports ground to Thortonhall Burn
F3 Busby Glen Woods
F4 Aspirational: Busby Glen Bridge
F5 Overlee Playing Fields: Viaduct Road to Moray Drive
F6 Overlee Playing Fields to Monteith Drive
F7 Whitecart Way: Monteith Drive to Linn Park
F8 Cathcart Cemetery
F9 Aspirational: Station Road to Thortonhall Burn
F10 East Kilbride Road at Busby

Annex 2: Background plans, policies and strategies

The following statute, policy and strategy sources were taken into account when considering the Core Paths Plan:

- Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
- Part 1 Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 - Guidance for Local Authorities and National Park Authorities produced by the Scottish Executive
- Core Paths Plans: A Guide to Good Practice produced by the Paths for All Partnership and Scottish Natural Heritage
- East Renfrewshire Outdoor Access Strategy
- Eaglesham and Whitelee Forest Path Planning Study
- Eastwood Path Planning Project
- Levern Valley Path Network Report and Route Proposals
- Adopted East Renfrewshire Local Plan 2003
- East Renfrewshire Local Transport Strategy 2008-2011
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan for East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde
- Dams to Darnley Country Park Management Plan

Acknowledgments

East Renfrewshire Council thanks the Local Access Forum for their hard work and long hours put into making this plan.

Images supplied by Dams to Darnley Country Park Countryside Ranger Service and Whitelee Countryside Ranger Service.

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