

Castle Loch Infrastructure Upgrade - 2021

In October 2020 Paths for All visited Castle Loch to undertake an infrastructure accessibility audit. The visit covered 4595m of path, bridges and boardwalk and the following notes extract the key points raised from their 63-page report. This audit start point is 'what would be the ideal if starting from scratch', the auditor then advises the recipient to assess the report recommendations based on what is financially and practically achievable within the various constraints.

At the end of the document I've included the full costings they provided, followed by the revised costings on the priority areas to undertake, based on the CLLCT Board meeting of 22/6/21 and subject to fundraising.

1. Lochfield Cottage to Innerfield Burn

Overview

Path of compacted type 1 sub-base, 1.4m wide but vegetation is encroaching to 60cm width in places

Actions

- Carefully scrape vegetation back along path edges, cut back overhanging vegetation to 3.5m height and 1m either side of path.
- Dig in drainage letts along path where water pools – min width 20cm
- Build up subbase at either end of bridge so level

2. Innerfield Burn to Kirkhirst Wood

Overview

Short section of path of compacted type 1 sub-base, 1.4m wide but vegetation is encroaching to 60cm width in places, giving way to shared farm track with deep ruts and uneven central section

Actions

- New section of path linking Innerfield Burn to Kirkhirst Wood
- Infill wheel ruts on track

3. Grassland Path to Valison Burn

Overview

Path of compacted type 1 sub-base, 1.4m wide but vegetation is encroaching to 0.3-0.4m width, sub-base stone is thin in places and path undulates, pooling water

Actions

- carefully scrape vegetation back along path edges,
- Build up surface stone thickness
- Build up surface stone in areas that pool water

4. Valison Burn to the Castle

Overview

Timber ramp and boardwalk giving way to a path of compacted type 1 sub-base, 1.4m wide but vegetation is encroaching to 60cm width in places. Ramp becomes flooded after heavy rains, timbers of ramp, bridge and boardwalk nearing end of life – rotting in places and undulating due to tree roots. Steep climb up to castle approach track (12% gradient)

Actions

- Replace board walk, Valison burn bridge and ramp
 - Min. 1600mm wide boardwalk, passing places no more than 50m apart, raise height in places that are the initial flooding point – see specification in audit report
 - ramp needs to extend 15m further on from present position.
- Carefully scrape vegetation back along path edges

5. Castle track - Castle Main wood - small grassland area

Overview

Castle access track of compacted aggregate giving way to tarmac then path of compacted type 1 sub-base generally 0.6m - 1m wide and short stretch of boardwalk

Actions

- Repairs to fence and kissing gate next to cattle grid
- carefully scrape vegetation back along path edges through wood/grassland
- Dig in drainage letts along path where water pools - min width 20cm - through wood/grassland
- Build up surface stone thickness where terram matting exposed
- Humped board walk needs aggregate building up at each end.

6. Sculpture trail woodland path

Overview

Path of compacted aggregate (smaller stone than other paths). Drainage culverts very old and largely completely/partially silted up

Actions

- Explore if culvert pipes can be cleared of debris
- Carefully scrape vegetation back along path edges
- Instate hard base area around picnic bench and link to path
- Improve surface of laybys (council or CL?)
- Install/improve link paths from layby to paths x 4
- Improve link between layby and accessible path leading to the accessible platform
- Valison burn bridge and bridge near accessible platform needs aggregate building up at each end. Ideally replace bridges with width of 1.5m
- Accessible platform needs repairing and resurfacing
- Remove kerbing and install link path to picnic bench on accessible platform
- Replace picnic bench on accessible platform to accessible bench

- Tidy up entrance from access road to car park near bowls club – remove/replace old fencing, possibly install entrance arch – ‘Welcome to Castle Loch’

7. Victory Park to Beauly Cottage

Overview

Sits outside CL nature reserve boundary. Mix of aggregate path, open amenity grass, rough path and formal Highways' pavement.

Actions

- Little in the way of formal works by CL. Encourage community to explore a path across Victory Park to Sailing club

8. Beauly house to Lochfield Cottage

Overview

Re-enter nature reserve boundary on path of compacted aggregate through to loch side car park. Rough, unmarked path across grass to join 50m tarmac section to Lochfield Cottage

Actions

- Carefully scrape vegetation back along path edges
- Remove tree stump encroaching in to path
- Lower kerb where path joins loch side car park

General actions

Shallow coating of 20mm scalpings to depth of 50mm

Cover with whindust of 25mm depth on all paths to improve accessibility

Paths for All Original Cost Estimates:

The following cost estimates were provided by Paths for All as a best estimate for undertaking all the works identified within their audit report – be sitting down when you read it! See the following section for DF's costings based on the most urgent/necessary works.

1. Upgrade Existing Path Surface (Excludes upgrade of access tracks, installation of path across Victory Park and access link paths to B7020 laybys)					
	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total
Construct new path of approx. 3071 linm in length. Path to be formed to a min finished surface width of 1.5m	Clearance works: general tree and vegetation removal along line of path to facilitate any and all planned works. General corridor width to be a min of 3.5m, where possible, and height of 3.7m	1	Sum	£3750.00	£3,750.00
	Scrape existing path surface to width of 1.5m and use limited arisings to form verges, as detailed within Drawing No. CL/UPU/CLLCT/001.	4606	m ²	£2.50	£11,515.00
	Supply and install 20mm scalpings; to min. 50mm compacted depth on path section and max 1:40 camber (assumed ave. of 70mm uncompacted depth)	322.4	m ³	£55.00	£17,732.00
	Supply and install whin dust wearing course over prepared path base; to average 25mm compacted depth	4606	m ²	£2.90	£13,357.40
	Sub-total for contract works				£46,354.40
	Contingency	5	%		£2,317.72
	ADD Preliminaries eg welfare facilities, skips, security fencing	7.5	%		£3,650.41
					TOTAL
				Total with VAT	£62,787.04

DF Comments:

- This would be an ideal situation. I've always wanted to give the paths a coat of whin dust, which creates a smoother and more accessible surface. At this stage we might be better to undertake only at the most urgent sections eg grassland path

2. Optional Upgrade Works					
General costs for optional upgrade works. Includes replacement of existing bridges, installation of piped culvert at chainage 2619 linm, recycled picnic benches, new 122 linm x 1.5m wide link path across amenity grass area and new 40 linm x 1.5m wide ramp by-pass path at chainage 1749 linm.	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total
	Formalise link paths from circular route to B7020. 4no. 1.5m wide links constructed to general detail in Drawing No. CL/UPHT/CLLCT/002	69	m ²	£22.50	£1,552.50
	Replace existing 3no. timber bridges with new and including timber ramped approaches to Valison Burn bridge. General costs allow for supply and installation of pre-constructed kit style bridges with double handrails. Costs include constructed abutments, where required.	25.8	m ²	£1650.00	£42,570.00
	Supply and install heavy duty recycled plastic picnic benches	2	No.	£770.00	£1,540.00
	Construct 1.5m wide surfaced link path across amenity grass area between chainages 3940 and 4062 linm. Construct to general detail in Drawing No. CL/UPHT/CLLCT/002 with additional allowance for bench works to embankment.	183	m ³	£24.00	£4,392.00
	Installation of piped culvert to Drawing No. SD/PC/01 (300mm dia.). Replaces existing timber walkway at chainage 2619 linm.	1	No.	£420.00	£420.00
	Installation of fingerpost signage to match existing	1	No.	£300.00	£300.00
	Sub-total for contract works				£50,774.50
	Contingency	5	%	£	£2,538.72
	ADD Preliminaries	7.5	%	£	£3,998.49
			TOTAL	£57,311.71	
			Total with VAT	£68,774.05	

DF Comments:

- Improvements to layby surface and link paths to the main circular loch path would be good thing to do - laybys are DGC Highways responsibility.
- The approach to the 3 timber bridges detailed here is unnecessary as the metal bridge frame across Valison Burn is architecturally sound and just needs replacement timbers, the other 2 bridges near Vendace Burn could do with replacing.
- The link path across the amenity grass area is Victory Park and outside our boundary – we have suggested to LCC about a link path as part of their play park improvements.
- The humped timber walk way is along B7020 as exit wood on to Castle Main field – It will be difficult to change this as it is designed this way to overcome a large tree route, as well as being a boggy area

DF Comments:

3. New Build (Timber Walkway)						
	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total	
Take up and remove from site all existing raised timber walkway and construct new to approx. 226 linm in length. Raised walkway to be formed to a min finished width of 1.6m	Clearance works: removal of existing timber walkways (approx. 226linm) and disposal in licensed recycling centre	1	Sum	£7,500.00	£7,500.00	
	Supply and install 1.6m wide timber raised walkway to Drawing No. CL/LLW/CLLCT/002	362	m ²	£140.00	£50,680.00	
	Supply and install timber raised walkway passing place to min	3.5sqm	3 No.	£455.00	£1,365.00	
	Sub-total for contract works				£59,545.00	
	Contingency	5	%		£2,977.25	
	ADD Preliminaries	7.5	%		£4,689.17	
					TOTAL	£67,211.42
					Total with VAT	£80,653.70

- This definitely needs to happen as the boardwalk is an increasingly regular maintenance issue. The present boardwalk has been down approx. 25 years. Meetings with D&GC core path ranger has also concluded this same requirement

2. Path work: Create New Section of Path – option 1: contractors						
	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total	
Creation of new link path of approx. 89 linm from Innerfield Burn to Kirkhirst Wood	Supply and install 100mm scalpings; compacted, on weed supressing matting and max 1:40 camber	89	m3	£28.00	£2,492.00	
	Supply and install whin dust wearing course over prepared path base; to average 25mm compacted depth	89	m²	£2.90	£258.10	
	Sub-total for contract works				£2750.10	
	Contingency	5	%	£	£137.50	
	ADD Preliminaries	7.5	%	£	£206.26	
					TOTAL	£3,093.86
					Plus 20% vat	£3,712.63
2. Path work: Create New Section of Path – option 2: volunteers						
	Weed supressing matting	100m	1	£89.99	£89.99	
	Scalpings from Grange Quarry	40	20 tonne	£240.00	£480.00	
				TOTAL	£569.99	

3. Upgrade Grassland Path Surface						
	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total	
Upgrade path of approx. 457 linm in length. Path to be formed to a min finished surface width of 1.5m	Patch path route with scalpings to min. 50mm compacted depth	20	Tonne load	£240 + laying	£500.00	
	Supply and install whin dust wearing course over prepared path base; to average 25mm compacted depth	685.5	m ²	£2.90	£1,987.95	
	Sub-total for contract works				£2,487.95	
	Contingency	5	%		£124.40	
	ADD Preliminaries	7.5	%		£182.86	
					TOTAL	£2,795.21
					Plus 20% vat	£3,354.25

4. Other Miscellaneous Works and Items:					
	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total
	Repair holes and retarmac accessible platform and approach track	64	m ²	£42.00	£2,688.00
	Lochfield car park: create tarmac path of 1.4m width around the car park connecting woodland path and Lochfield Cottage. Improves accessibility, guides people away from walking across car park and tidies up worn grass walkway. Lower kerb	41m	m ²	£42.00	£1,722.00
	Replace 2 x timber bridges at Vendace Burn, 1.6m wide with handrail and either flush with path or ramp	8m	m ²	£500	£4,000.00
	Sub-total for contract works				£8,410.00
	Contingency	5	%	£	£420.50
	ADD Preliminaries	7.5	%	£	£662.29
				TOTAL	£9,492.79
				Plus 20% vat	£11,391.34

Total cost / Fundraising target:

1. New Build (Timber Walkway and Valison Bridge)	£85,772.26 – yr 1 2022
2. Path work: Create New Section of Path	£570.00 - Volunteers to build
3. Upgrade Grassland Path Surface	£3,354.25 - yr 2 2023
4. Other Miscellaneous Works and Items	£11,391.34_– yr 2 2023
5. Salary	£10,500
Total	£111,587.85

Funders and funding:

The prices above are based on the Paths for All pricing list (it is worth noting that we have tended to bring in past jobs under these prices. The prices are from October 2020 and anecdotal feedback is that timber prices have recently been increasing significantly).

Possible funding pots to explore:

Funding Pot	Amount to apply for	Notes
Robertson Trust: https://www.therobertsontrust.org.uk/funding/small-grants/	£15,000 yr1 £15,000 yr2	Eligible for 'Small Grants' - For registered charities with an annual income of between £25,000 and £100,000. Revenue funding of between £2,000 and £15,000 for up to five years. Large grants are for: For registered charities with an annual income of between £100,000 and £2 million. Revenue funding of between £15,000 and £50,000 for up to five years. Apply anytime – 8-12 wks to process
ANCBC: Large grant £20k	£20,000	Closing: Friday, 3rd December Board: 21 February 2022
Castle Loch fundraising campaign	£10,000 £15,000	See notes below on possible fundraising campaign Allocate £15k from America donation
Richard Masters Access Officer D&G Council	?	Emailed 27/7/21. Passed to Bryan Scott for consideration – likely they will be able to support
Minnigap 2 Foundation Scotland	£10,000	Closing 22/11 January Board
Hugh Fraser		
Landfill Tax		
Postcode Lottery		

Work start date: write tender docs during June, tender work during summer and start works autumn 2022 – winter 23. Out of bird breeding season, as per Nature Scot SSSI legal requirements and lower footfall

Next steps:

- Plan CL fundraising – monthly tea/sales, crowd fundraising, donation (QR code, tap machine), animal knit & auction,
- Complete funding applications

- PR campaign – website, social media, press
- Local schools/groups to do sponsored events

Approach to funding applications:

- Undertake work over 2 years to minimise disruption to visitor/user experience. Also, potentially unlocks multiple years funding eg Robertson Trust
- Show % increase in user numbers during Covid-19
- Push the health and well-being aspect – anecdotal feedback of users in remission using paths as part of recovery – set target of walking to the next bench, rest and return.

Castle loch Fundraising – target £20,000 - £30,000:

Sponsor a boardwalk board

- 226m with 6 timbers per metre = 1,356 timber boards
- Create 'sponsor a board' page on website/ link to crowdfunding page

Potential income: 1,356 x £10 per board sponsorship = £13,560

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/castlelochboardwalk> Live from Jan 22 to end Sept 22

Possibly have small dedication plaque sponsorship – cost? Bench plaques are £35.00 – too expensive to make viable

<https://www.laserart.co.uk/charity-appreciation-plaques/>

<https://www.ukengravers.co.uk/bench-plaques-518216>

crowdfunding pages

Create a fundraising page for the project to direct people to. Examples below – have asked people for recommendation on Facebook (7/10/21)

[Home Page - Invest My Community](#)

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/>

<https://www.justgiving.com/>

Animal knit & auction

- Find a selection of animal knit/felt patterns – swan, badger, fox... Design as a Castle Loch themed leaflet/pdf. DF has a few patterns at home.
- Put on the website for people to download - donation button/QR code
- Have people hand-in/post knitted items to us – photo opportunity
- Hold sale/auction of items as part of Lochfield Cottage tea in May 2022
- School kids get sponsored to make pompom animals and/or sell to family
- Has good PR opportunity and engages all sectors of community

Potential income: £1500

Contactless & QR donations

QR Code linked to Virgin Money Giving now set up – needs changing to new platform as VG stopping the end of October

Potential income: £1500

General fundraising:

Monthly tea and event at cottage

Potential income: £2000

Do a social media build up to the project

Launch the fundraising campaign and include QR code and link to donation page

Big launch in January / New Year

Month e-newsletter including donation ask

Sponsor a square

[Sponsor land for rewilding | Heal 3x3 \(healrewilding.org.uk\)](https://www.healrewilding.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofGallowHill/posts/547388878931449>

Other ideas?

Do the Board / community have any other ideas or successful things they have tried in the past?