

Lenzie Moss Local Nature Reserve AGM  
19 June 2013

## East Dunbartonshire & Mugdock Country Park Ranger Service Report

We continue to work on Lenzie Moss Local Nature Reserve with Friends of Lenzie Moss, following the 2009 - 2014 Management Plan.

Areas of work include:-

### **Conservation**

Lenzie Moss Local Nature Reserve conservation volunteer group has continued to grow in numbers from last year. 85 people turned up to volunteer over 6 separate work days throughout the winter months. That works out as an average of 14 volunteers per work day, which is a fantastic turnout.

This boost in numbers has allowed the conservation group to carry out a variety of tasks. At the end of last year they again were concentrating their efforts on Long-term Objective 1 and 2 from the Management Plan. The first is "to maintain and enhance the primary bog surface area of Lenzie Moss as an example of lowland raised bog habitat", and the second is to promote recovery of the area formerly cut for peat: Lenzie Moss, as an example of secondary re-vegetated raised mire. The group has been doing this by removing birch seedlings and scrub from the primary bog areas. The stumps are sprayed with herbicide to prevent the trees from growing back. The spread of birch trees if left unchecked would lead to further loss of bog plant communities and the functioning mire.

Two of the conservation volunteer work days were devoted to the removal of non-native and invasive garden plants from the woodlands and grasslands surrounding the bog area. Invasive species included rhododendron, beech scrub and seedlings and bridlewort. Monitoring and spraying of Japanese knotweed is ongoing. There are 3 areas that are treated with herbicide every year. This task is carried out by the Ranger Service and not volunteers, but is worth mentioning here along with the other invasive species work. Removing invasive plants is important to maintain and enhance the nature conservation value of the habitats surrounding the raised bog as set out in Long-term Objective 3.

Other works carried out by the volunteer group have included: installing anti-slip panels to the boardwalk. FoLM were successful again in securing funds to purchase the panels. The decision to swap from strips to panels was taken after it was brought to our attention that the bumping up and down from going over the strips in a wheelchair was making it inaccessible to certain users. It is my understanding that the remaining length of boardwalk without any anti-slip surface will be covered in finch mesh to provide an anti-slip surface in the near future.

Path repairs and maintenance continue to be a priority, and it was only when we were looking into the information that is gathered by the people-counter for the Sharing Good Practice event on the Moss that we realised why it should be. The people counter is a pressure pad installed in the path between Fern Ave. and Hawthorn Ave. It records the number of passes over it every day. We were amazed to find out that the recorded number of passes from Feb. 2012 to Feb. 2013 was 51,760. Although this not an accurate count of visitors to the Moss, it does give us a good indication of visitor numbers and tells us that Lenzie Moss paths are well used! Dogs do not trigger the pressure pad!

Paul has already mentioned the hugely successful cleanup on the Moss run in conjunction with Lenzie Fair Trade group

Over the last year there have been many other groups taking part in conservation tasks at Lenzie Moss. These include: Mugdock Conservation Volunteers (Sat., Mon. and midweek group), Community Service Volunteers, Duke of Edinburgh, Princes' Trust, New Caledonian Woodlands and Kibble Education and Care Centre.

The Ranger Service visits Lenzie Moss regularly; however, we rely on you and the public to report things like trees blocking paths and broken boardwalk slats to us. If there is anything you think we can help with at Lenzie Moss, please call.

### **Recreation**

The Ranger Service encourages people to use Lenzie Moss for recreation by promoting the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, as well as carrying out minor repairs on the path network. Advice is given to people regarding suitable paths to walk, cycle, horse-ride etc., and how Lenzie Moss Local Nature Reserve links to many other routes in East Dunbartonshire.

Twice over the last year the Ranger Service has assisted East Dunbartonshire Community Safety Officers in delivering their campaign against dog fouling. They have a zero tolerance approach to dog fouling and speak to all dog walkers reminding them to carry bags, pick up the poo and bin it, and that it is an offence that can incur an on-the-spot fine if they don't. Dog owners are also reminded that they can dispose of the poo in any bin now.

### **Education**

When working with schools, nurseries and uniformed groups, the Ranger Service continues to use Lenzie Moss as an outdoor classroom. With woodland, grassland and the moss itself it provides a huge scope for many environmental education topics covered in the current curriculum. As well as that, it is easy for groups to access and is within walking distance for many, making it easy to get to without the need for transport. Merlwood Nursery have been back to visit the Moss again, as well as Lenzie Nursery who enjoyed finding soft toy animals and discovering where the animals would live, and what they would eat in and around the Moss. Primary 2 from Lenzie Moss Primary School's topic this year was 'Lenzie'. They decided that they couldn't complete their topic without having a visit to Lenzie Moss, as they see it as being an important part of Lenzie. They wanted to find out about the plants and animals living there, and learn more about the history of the Moss: why it's there, and how people have used it in the past.

### **Events**

Paul has already talked about the events that take place at Lenzie Moss. However, I want to point out a few highlights from last year.

Back by popular demand was the 'Build a Birch Broom – Harry Potter Style!' It continues to be real crowd-puller, attracting around 60 people, all of whom leave with a broom made from Lenzie Moss birch scrub. It's a great event, as we are able to talk to people about the Moss, and get across how important it is to remove the birch scrub to help with the recovery of the bog.

Another popular event last year was 'Bats about Lenzie', which took place early in September. As the high-frequency sounds that bats use to help them find their prey, called echo-location, is not audible to us, we had bat detectors which allowed us to hear an electronic representation of the bats' finding their food. The best display of this was at the grassland at Heather Drive.

Still to come this year we have 'Creepy Crawlies and Conservation' in July, Harry Potter Brooms in the school October holidays, and a new event Making a Christmas Birch Wreath in December. As well as these, the conservation volunteer days start up again in October.

The Ranger Service would like to thank the FoLM for all the hard work and effort they put in to promoting Lenzie Moss as a fabulous place for wildlife and for people to enjoy, and we are looking forward to another year working together on the Moss.