

## Spend some time at Dams to Darnley



Wide open space and lovely walks will give you time for reflection at Dams to Darnley.

Welcome to our eighth edition of Wagtail, the newsletter and events calendar for Dams to Darnley Country Park.

Inside you will find:

- Spring events lookback
- Country park update
- History feature on the railway
- Getting to the country park
- Something fishy
- Spotlight on pike
- Summer events calendar

The next edition of Wagtail will be out in autumn 2010.

## Spring in full swing

THE FIRST EVENT OF THE spring was a volunteer task in early March.

A small band of volunteers cleared over 20 bags of litter from the shoreline of Balgray Reservoir, watched on by a pair of mute swans.

At Easter the countryside rangers had three events planned.

The first, 'A walk in the woods' was cancelled due to very heavy rain.

Later it was glorious sunshine for a game of pond bingo at the 'Deeply dippy at Darnley' event.

Each group pond dipped ticking off the creatures they discovered. The highlight was one group discovering a water scorpion allowing them to shout "house!"

The fine weather continued for the 'By candlelight' event.

This involved an evening walk along the Balgray Reservoir path, then the group made lanterns to float out over the dam.

Along the return walk pipistrelle bats put on a fantastic overhead display.



## You heard it here first...

FOLLOWING ON FROM EVENTS HELD IN BARRHEAD last year, a draft country park development and management plan has been completed.

The plan aims to guide the future of the country park project over the next five years.

Further details about consultation to accompany the draft plan will be available over the coming months.

Two important issues raised at the Barrhead events were the need to create safe path links to the country park from where people live and the provision of car parking.

Plans to develop new path links to improve access to the country park from Newton Mearns and Barrhead are currently being worked on.

Also, planning permission has been granted for a new car park off Balgraystone Road, beside the entrance to the Balgray Reservoir path.

Subject to a number of conditions being finalised it is hoped that work can begin on the car park in the autumn.

Look out for further updates in future editions of Wagtail.



A group playing pond bingo on our 'Deeply dippy' event.

## Spotlight on park history

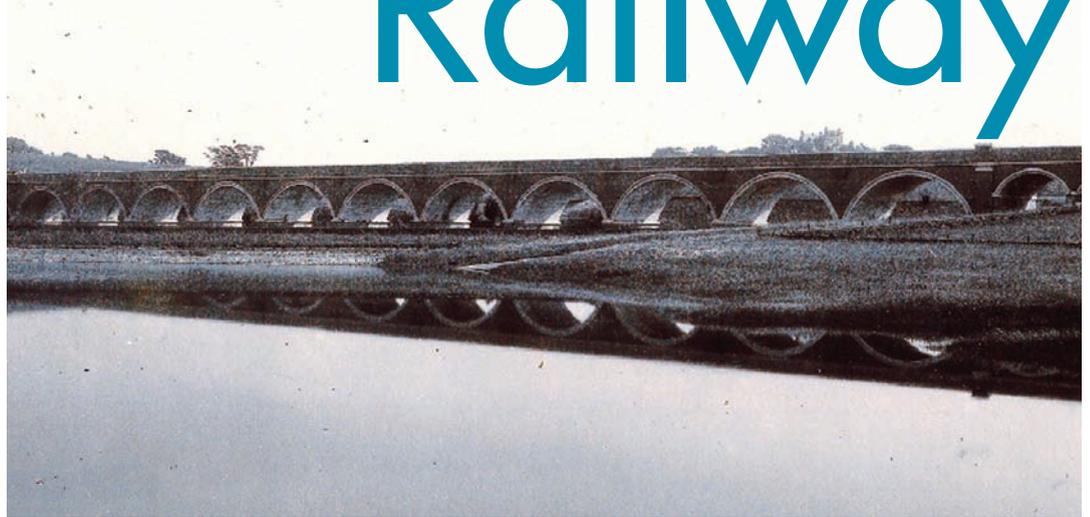
THE TRAIN LINE WHICH cuts through the country park originally formed part of the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway.

It weaves through the country park and across the southern end of Waulkmill Glen Reservoir, carried on a predominantly brick built, Victorian viaduct.

The Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway was constructed by Robert McAlpine for Caledonian Railways between 1884 and 1890.

It first appears on the third edition (second revision) Ordnance Survey map (1914-1920).

The Waulkmill Glen Reservoir viaduct was one of 82 bridges and arches built along the route. During the same period McAlpine's were working on the famous Glenfinnan viaduct, which was completed in 1901.



Waulkmill Glen Reservoir viaduct is one of the most photographed features of the park. 1903 - courtesy of Caledonian Railway Association.

The railway was built to provide services from Glasgow to the Ayrshire coast. Various stations were opened and closed over the years, including Patterton, which first opened on 1 May 1903.

In January 1917 Patterton station was closed for two years as a result of the war time economy, but was

# Railway

reopened as Patterton for Darnley Rifle Range in 1919.

A proposed station at Lyoncross never came to fruition.

In 1923 the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway was merged with a former rival (Glasgow and Southern Western Railway) to form the London, Midland and

Scottish Railway.

Several stations were closed over the years, as the merged companies were no longer competing for business.

Of the original line only the small portion through the country park, between Neilston and Newton Mearns, survives.

## Something fishy...

COARSE ANGLING IS A sport growing in popularity all over the UK and is on the increase in Scotland.

For generations anglers have been enjoying fishing for a range of coarse fish at the Barrhead dams.

These include, eel, roach, perch and especially pike (see our spotlight on pike on the opposite page).

Eels have suffered a massive decline in numbers due to over catching by humans and the Scottish Government has now passed a bill making it illegal to fish for and/or catch eel.

Coarse fishing tends to be catch and release, where fish caught are returned immediately back to the water.

Across the globe several fish we class as coarse in the UK are eaten and enjoyed by countless people.

The reservoirs are not stocked so catch and release is recommended to keep fish numbers up and allow others to enjoy their sport.

The countryside rangers run a few angling events each year and we are lucky enough to have the support of professional coaches from the Scottish Federation of Coarse Anglers [www.sfca.co.uk](http://www.sfca.co.uk) and the Pike Anglers Alliance for Scotland [www.paasglasgow.com](http://www.paasglasgow.com)

Details of the next angling event can be found on the back page. If you are an



SFCA coach John Rae at the last angling event.

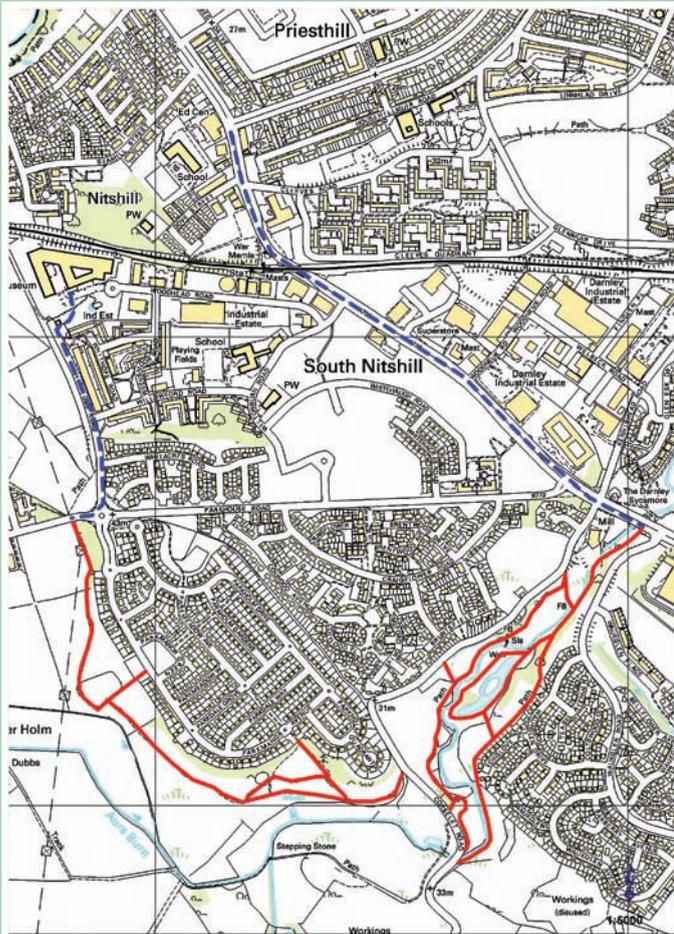
angler that uses the Barrhead dams or are interested in angling please send your contact details to the countryside rangers (see back page) as we are

looking to get everyone to work together to make improvements for all anglers at the Barrhead dams in the country park.

Report any fly-tipping, graffiti or antisocial behaviour to the countryside rangers Richard 0141 577 4053 or Eilidh 0141 577 4054.

For outside office hours: to Clean Glasgow 0800 027 7027 or East Renfrewshire Ring and Report 0800 013 0076.

# Getting to Dams to Darnley is a walk in the park...



© Crown Copyright OS  
Licence 100023382 2010

THE COUNTRY PARK, WHICH COVERS MOST OF the greenspace between Barrhead, Newton Mearns and Darnley, is only a short walk away. In this edition of the newsletter we look at routes to the country park from Glasgow Museums Resource Centre and the shops at the junction of Nitshill Road and Peat Road.

**From Glasgow Museums Resource Centre**  
(1/3 mile to the country park) 10mins.

Follow the path from the Glasgow Museum Resource Centre heading right towards Whitriggs Road and walk for 420 meters, until you reach the roundabout at Parkhouse Road. Turn right onto Parkhouse Road and walk for approximately 55 meters until you are opposite one of the park entrances, then carefully cross the busy Parkhouse Road. From here follow the path and explore the country park.

**From Nitshill Road shops**  
(3/4 mile to the country park) 15-20mins.

Walk along Nitshill Road in an easterly direction, after 350 meters you will pass under the railway bridge, continue walking along Nitshill Road until you reach the Darnley Sycamore. Then cross over Nitshill Road and turn left, the country park entrance at Darnley Mill is only 100m away.

## Spotlight on pike

NORTHERN PIKE IS ONE of the largest, most exciting species for an angler to catch in Scotland.

Pike is a predatory fish found in most fresh water across the northern hemisphere.

Scotland is arguably the best location for pike fishing across the globe.

It is easily identified by its mottled green and cream markings, pointed head and mouth full of sharp teeth.

Pike lay in wait in the shallows. As a prey fish passes they strike with a fierce surge forward

propelled by their powerful tail fins.

They grab the fish with their teeth before turning it and swallowing it alive, head first.

Pike grow rapidly and an adult can reach a length of 1.5 meters and weigh over 20kg.

They are especially important in the ecosystem as they eat diseased or injured fish helping to keep a healthy fish population.

Contact the countryside rangers to find out about fishing opportunities.

### PIKE FACTS

- The largest recorded pike caught on rod and line in Scotland weighed 47lb 11oz (about 23Kg) and was caught by Tommy Morgan in Loch Lomond in 1945.
- There are several records of pike choking to death attempting to eat another pike of a similar size.
- Earliest pike fossils found in Britain are around half a million years old.
- Their heads are covered in little holes which help pick up vibrations from potential prey.



Northern pike.

# Dams to Darnley Country Park Events calendar

- All events are FREE.
- Booking is required for some events.
- All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

## Wild orchids count

Saturday 19 June, 10am -12.30pm

**Description:** As part of the International Year of Biodiversity help survey the protected wild orchids.

**Location:** Meet at the Ashoka restaurant car park, Corselet Road, off Nitshill Road, Darnley.



## Evening elope II

Thursday 8 July, 7.30 - 10pm

**Description:** A summer evening stroll in the beautiful countryside. A moderate level of fitness is required.

**Location:** Meet at St Luke's High School, Springfield Road, Barrhead.



## Volunteer day

Saturday 10 July, 10am - 2pm

**Description:** Get involved with some of the more practical tasks to maintain your country park.

**Location:** Meet at the Ashoka restaurant car park, Corselet Road, off Nitshill Road, Darnley.



## Fish 'n' tips

Sunday 18 July, 11am - 2pm

**Description:** Free and expert angling coaching at the Barrhead dams. Bring your own rod if you have one, if not extra equipment will be available.

**Location:** Waulkmill Glen Reservoir, near viaduct, Barrhead dams (about a 15 minute walk from the Ashoka restaurant car park).

Call for directions.



## Bat and moth night

Thursday 12 August, 8.30pm

**Description:** Discover the bats and moths that can be seen around the reservoirs.

**Location:** Meet at St Luke's High School, Springfield Road, Barrhead.



## Make your ways to Gleniffer Braes

Saturday 14 August, 9.30am - 3pm

**Description:** 10 mile walk from Dams to Darnley to Gleniffer Braes Country Park, before returning by mini-bus.

**Location:** Meet at Patterton Train Station car park, Stewarton Road.



## Green games

Sunday 29 August, 2 - 4pm

**Description:** Take part in fun and games to discover more about your local country park and celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity.

Children must be joined by a parent or guardian.

**Location:** Meet at the Ashoka restaurant car park, Corselet Road, off Nitshill Road, Darnley.



## KEY CHART



No booking required



Booking required



Bring a packed lunch



Wear appropriate clothing



Bring a torch

## Join our mailing list or contact the countryside rangers

The Dams to Darnley countryside rangers are planning a series of events throughout the year.

If you would like to be sent information on upcoming events and all the latest news join our mailing list.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No \_\_\_\_\_

To join our mailing list post or email your details to the address below.

This information will be treated as confidential and used only for the purpose stated. If you do not wish your details to be held on computer tick this box

### Contact details

Email: [d2d@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:d2d@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)  
 Telephone: 0141 577 4054 (Eilidh Milne)  
 0141 577 4053 (Richard Bolton)  
 Website: [www.damstodarnley.org](http://www.damstodarnley.org)

Post: Dams to Darnley Country Park, East Renfrewshire Council, Environment Department, 2 Spiersbridge Way, Spiersbridge Business Park, Thornliebank, East Renfrewshire G46 8NG