

Enjoy Dams to Darnley's rich history



Culture and Sport Glasgow
(Museums)

27 September 1899: group includes Councillors and officials led by Lord Provost Sir David Richmond.
Picture taken 110 years ago this month at Ryat Linn Reservoir.

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

Inside you will find:

- **Summer events
lookback**
- **History feature on
Darnley House**
- **Anti-social behaviour**
- **Routes from Parkhouse**
- **Spotlight on roe deer**
- **Autumn events calendar**

Our next edition will be out in winter 2009.

Toad abode

ON THE 6 JUNE THE countryside rangers organised an event to build a winter home for frogs, toads and newts as part of the BBC Breathing Places, Dirty Weekend.

13 people volunteered for what was going to be a morning of hard work. The first task was to dig a large hole two feet deep, which would later be filled with boulders, stone, leaves and twigs. This would be covered with soil leaving entry gaps for the amphibians to burrow in.

The group split into two,

half digging the hole, while the other half collected boulders, leaves and twigs. Digging was far from easy, the heavily compacted soil needed a pick to make any impact while the undulating landscape made transporting boulders by wheel barrow no simple task.

After a few hours of hard work the hibernacula was complete. Gaps between the boulders and leaves will provide a cosy home for frogs, toads and newts to hibernate over the frosty winter.



Step out for summer



THE SUMMER EVENTS GOT OFF TO A GREAT START with over 35 people joining the rangers on a family fun cycle to celebrate National Bike Week.

The cycle from St Luke's High School followed the main spinal path to Darnley before returning to Barrhead to complete this 12km round trip.

The evening elope was the perfect way to spend a glorious July evening. It proved extremely popular with over 30 people taking in the scenery; including spotting great crested grebe chicks on Waulkmill Glen Reservoir.

Dragonflies were the inspiration for our dragonfly art event in Darnley where dragonflies were created from various materials. The warm weather allowed plenty of opportunities to see the dragonflies and damselflies that live in the park.

Over 40 people joined the peek into the past event which was led by local heritage specialist Stuart Nisbet who gave a fascinating account of the industrial past of the Darnley Mill area of the country park.

Spotlight on park history

Darnley House and Bleachfields

BLEACHING WAS AN IMPORTANT PROCESS IN textile production.

Before chemicals, bleaching was a natural process where cloth was laid out in the sun to bleach. Renfrewshire had the most prolific bleaching industry in Scotland, with more than a hundred fields.

The first reference to the location of the bleachfield complex at Darnley is Richardson's map (1795). Darnley field was owned by Charles Tennant (1768-1838) and Paisley bleacher John Cochrane. It was at his bleachworks at Darnley that Charles Tennant created the chemical combination of chlorine and lime powder leading to the development of bleaching liquor and powder which was used world wide. Lime is likely to have been sourced locally from extensive quarries. This revolutionised the industry, reducing time needed for bleaching from months to hours. Tennant went on to develop Europe's largest chemical works at St. Rollox in Glasgow.

Within the bleachfields there were various man-made ponds and reservoirs, the largest of which was later used as a curling pond. The reservoirs allowed burn water to settle and clear. The field included workers houses, a laundry, boiling houses, starchworks and stove houses; also pigsties and dungsteads. Textiles produced were very valuable; the field was a target of thieves and was robbed in 1819. The post-1811 buildings were located at the bottom end of the main lade. Most have been covered by landfill, but the lower courses of a few buildings survive today.



Painting commissioned by the Maxwell family c.1830.
(c) Courtesy of RCAHMS Licensor www.rcahms.gov.uk

Darnley House developed adjacent to the bleachfield buildings, initially as the manager's house. The east wing was built by Charles Tennant (pre-1811) and extended west by Robert Smith in 1819. The industrial bleachfield was transformed into a modest improved landscape; buildings became offices and home farm. The main reservoir became a curling pond surrounded by mature trees, which can still be seen today. Later Ordnance Survey maps show the gradual decline of Darnley House, associated structures and designed landscape.

(Information from local historian Stuart Nisbet)

Tackling anti-social behaviour

ON THE 24 FEBRUARY 2009 the countryside rangers received information about shots being heard in Waulkmill Glen woodland. The police were called and directed to the scene. This led to two males getting their air rifles and telescopic sights seized as productions. The men have been charged and found guilty of having a firearm and ammunition in a public place. Sentencing took place on 2 September 2009.

Another recent success story involves effective partnership working between Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Community Safety Services (GCSS) and Strathclyde Police.

Using a CCTV camera van GCSS regularly patrol Corselet Road which has been a hotspot for fly-tippers.

Recently the camera van filmed a dumper who is being charged with fly-tipping.

The dumper is awaiting sentencing where he could receive a fine of up to £40,000.

Another incidence of fly-tipping is also currently under investigation by Environmental Protection Services at Glasgow City Council following intelligence gathered.

Fly-tipping is not only unsightly but degrades areas for wildlife and public enjoyment. Last year Scotland spent £2,314,629 on clearing fly-tips.

Please help maintain the country park as an attractive area for peace and enjoyment by reporting any problems.

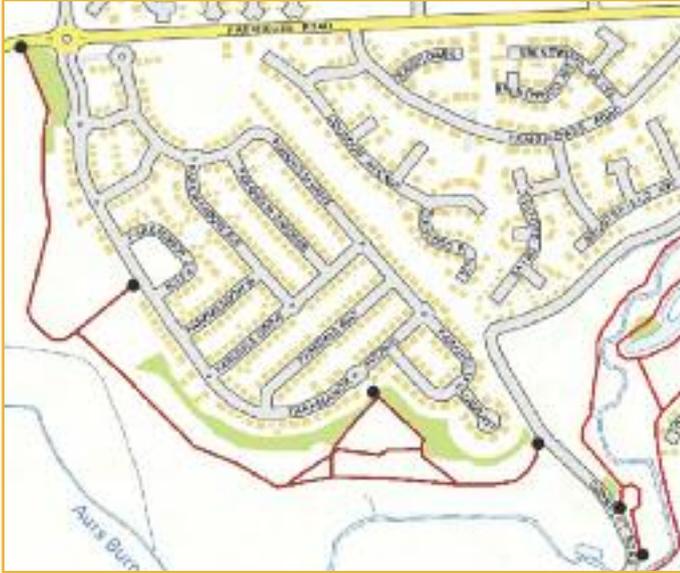


Asbestos found dumped on Corselet Road on 16 May 2009.

Report any problems

Report any fly-tipping, graffiti or antisocial behaviour to the countryside rangers Richard 0141 577 4053 or Eilidh 0141 577 4054. Or outwith office hours to Clean Glasgow 0800 027 7027 or East Renfrewshire 'Ring and Report' 0800 013 0076.

Parkhouse path route



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AS PART OF THE PARKLANDS MEADOW ESTATE, a new path goes all the way from Parkhouse Road to Corselet Road. The route is about three quarters of a mile in length from end to end and is ideal for walking, cycling or riding.

The entrance at Parkhouse Road is just next to the roundabout (on the Barrhead side) at the start of the Parklands estate. On the Corselet Road side the path comes out at Darnley Mill and if you turn right the route takes you all the way to the Barrhead Dams, about a mile to the south.

There is also a network of smaller paths which link the Parklands Meadow estate into the main Parkhouse Road to Corselet Road route, with two entrances from Parkmanor Avenue. Some of these links are quite steep, but there are alternative routes with gentler gradients.

Spotlight on roe deer

ROE DEER BECAME

extinct in England over the 18th century as a result of over hunting and habitat destruction, but following reintroductions in the 19th century populations have re-established. Roe deer are now widespread across Scotland and much of England and are increasing their range into Wales.

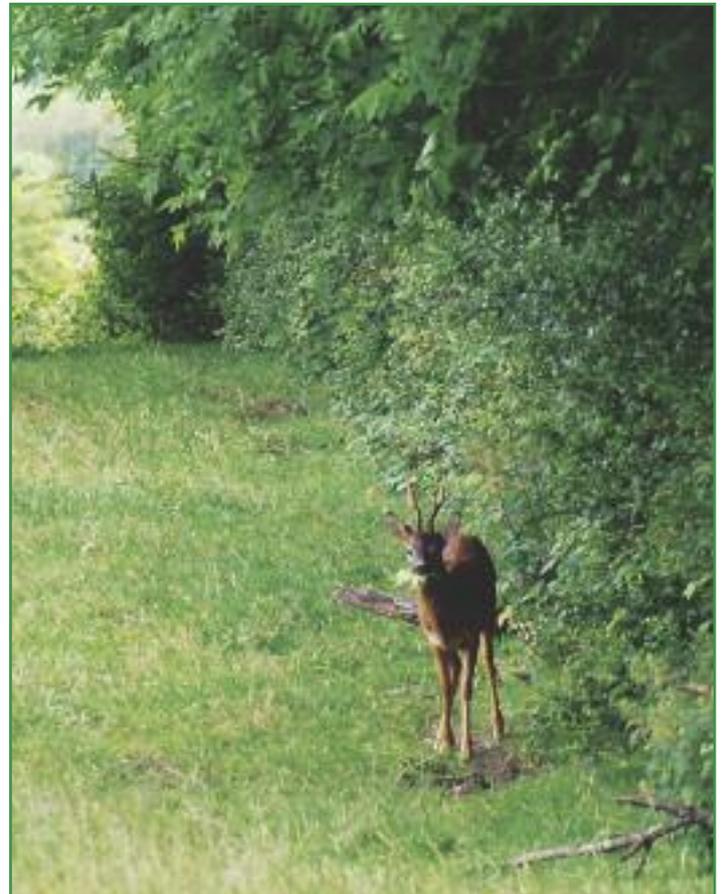
They are a foxy colour in summer, turning greyer over winter months; they stand around three quarters of a metre to their shoulder, male bucks are slightly larger than female does. Facially, they show a distinctive black moustache with white chin strap. If alarmed their white rump patch expands creating a large disk which you may spot as they dart for cover.

Open woodland is their

preferred habitat and they can often be spotted feeding at woodland fringes in the country park. As numbers increase, deer spread into more open areas such as scrub, farmland and even motorway verges. Roe deer are herbivores, some favourites include deciduous tree buds and leaves, herbs, brambles and scrub. They are active over 24 hours but most likely to be spotted at dawn and dusk.

The breeding season, or rut, takes place in July and August and kids are born the following May/June.

During rutting bucks become aggressive, retaining territories and does, behaviour includes 'barking', tree rubbing, scent marking and chasing does around tress or boulders.



Roe deer feeding on sycamore leaves on woodland edge in Dams to Darnley Country Park.

ROE DEER FACTS

- The range of European roe deer spans from north of the Arctic Circle as far south as Iran and they

occur in all European countries except Iceland and Ireland.

- Only bucks have antlers, these are

short with no more than three points.

- Following breeding, development of the embryo is delayed

allowing kids to be born in more fruitful times; Roe deer is the only hoofed animal in which this occurs.

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.

Event: Food for free

Date & time: Saturday 19 September, 1.30–3.30pm

Description: As part of the East Renfrewshire food festival, join the countryside rangers on this food for free event as we discover some of the edible plants and fungi in the country park.

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



Event: Peace in the park

Date & time: Monday 21 September, 10–11.30am

Description: To celebrate international peace day join the rangers on this short relaxing walk, to be followed by a free outdoor Tai Chi taster session within the country park.

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



Event: Photo walking

Date & time: Saturday 3 October, 10am–12noon

Description: Photo walking is simply walking with a camera for the main purpose of taking pictures of things that you may find interesting along the route. This walk will focus on the Darnley area of the country park.

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

* Remember to bring your camera.



Event: Drawn in by Darwin

Date & time: Thursday 15 October, 1–3pm

Description: The Big Draw campaign encourages people of all ages and abilities to get creative and express their ideas through art. Celebrating the bicentenary of Charles Darwin's birth to inspire your works of art.

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



Event: Volunteer day

Date & time: Saturday 31 October, 10am–2pm

Description: Get your hands dirty and get involved with some of the more practical work needed to maintain the country park. A reasonable level of fitness will be required for tasks involved.

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



Event: Something fishy

Date & time: Sunday 8 November, 12noon–3pm

Description: Get some tips about angling at the Barrhead Dams - what's there and how to catch them. This is also a chance to meet other local anglers, take part in a tidy up (2-3pm) and find out about Dams to Darnley Country Park. Balgray Reservoir is best accessed by parking at St Luke's High School, Springfield Road, Barrhead and walking up Balgraystone Road (opposite the school). About five minutes up the road there is an entrance to the reservoir on the left hand side, follow this and see us there. Please contact the countryside rangers for more information.

Location: Balgray Reservoir, parking at St Luke's High School, Springfield Road, Barrhead.



Event: Walk the Craigie

Date & time: Saturday 21 November, 10am–12noon

Description: Discover the country park from Duncarnock Hill, known locally as the 'Craigie'. This walk requires a moderate level of fitness, but the views make the effort more than worthwhile.

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



Event: Plant a tree

Date & time: Saturday 5 December, 11am–12noon

Description: Be part of the UK's largest annual tree celebration, National Tree Week, and celebrate the beginning of the planting season. Get your hands dirty tree planting.

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

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
 Telephone: 0141 577 4054 (Eilidh Milne)
 0141 577 4053 (Richard Bolton)
 Website: 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