

Creating the Green Network

...in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire



**Carts
Greenspace**

Wealthier and Fairer Scotland promoted through volunteering

In 2009/10 Carts Greenspace tried to ensure that the green network in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire is contributing towards a Wealthier and Fairer Scotland by using its projects to generate opportunities for jobs, training and - particularly - practical volunteering experience.

The small size of Carts Greenspace's team means that these efforts usually involve partnerships with other agencies. One such partnership is with Scottish



Volunteers from BTCV Scotland's Renfrewshire Green Gym plant wildlife friendly species beside a stepping stone path in the new wildlife garden at Inchinnan Primary School.

Business in the Community, which encourages private sector companies to undertake environmental team challenges.

2009/10 saw a particularly well supported event which involved 76 staff from the local Life Technologies biosciences company carrying out woodland management works at Erskine.

A smaller project in-

involved staff from Shell Shared Services "Better World" team completing a beach clean at Erskine.

Most volunteering opportunities were provided through an ongoing partnership with BTCV Scotland's Renfrewshire Green Gym initiative. Through this, teams of people seeking (free)

healthy exercise outdoors and an opportunity to support their local environment have completed valuable greenspace projects at Inchinnan Primary School,

Thorn Primary School in Johnstone, St Margaret's Nursery School in Johnstone, Glenburn Nursery School in Paisley, Auchenback Primary School in Barrhead and at Newshot Island Local Nature Reserve.

Reviving vacant and derelict land for green network uses?

One other aspect of generating a Wealthier and Fairer Scotland which the Carts Greenspace team is trying to tackle is the treatment of the legacy of post-industrial vacant and derelict land. At least two of the projects which Carts Green-

space investigated in 2009/10 involved the regeneration of vacant land: the Weavers Linn Respite Centre Garden Project at Glenburn and the Ferguslie Park Community Gardening Scheme's plans for former housing land off

Barochan Crescent. Both projects have received design and cost estimating inputs from Carts Greenspace and have now reached the stage of facing the fund raising challenges before construction work can start on-site.

2009/10 ANNUAL STATEMENT

Special points of interest:

- £111,583 invested in greenspace improvement.
- 21 transformation projects completed in the year
- 11 school projects create a hectare of new outdoor learning spaces.
- 2.5ha of habitat enhancement for biodiversity.



Weavers Linn has the advantage as a possible growing ground of being fenced and having a purpose built classroom and storage container for tools but its ground conditions are very difficult.



Carts Greenspaces encourages Smarter Scotland through eleven school ground improvement projects



Langcraigs Primary

In 2009/10 Carts Greenspace enhanced outdoor learning spaces by improving

almost one hectare of ground in partnership with 11 different schools.

Carts Greenspace also assisted five of these schools to make successful bids for National Lottery funds, bringing £49,950 to Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire.

Auchenback Primary School in Barhead saw the creation of an Eco Trail, a quiet seating corner and a sensory garden in a project costing

£12,000 (£10,000 Awards for All and £2,000 school fund raising).

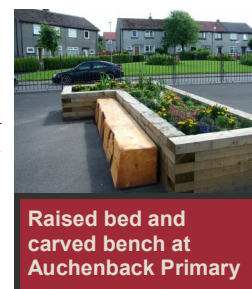
Langcraigs Primary School in Paisley also used a £10,000 Awards for All grant to complete Phase 3 of its grounds improvements, this year creating a picnic seating area, a wildlife garden and a more formally landscaped vegetable and herb garden.

Crookfur Primary School in East Renfrewshire created an ambitious community wildlife garden, deploying a £10,000 grant it had won from the Heritage Lottery Fund's "Breathing Spaces" campaign (promoted in partnership with the BBC).

West Primary School in Paisley

treated two problem areas with an £8,625 Awards for All grant, turning a dingy courtyard into an Eco Garden and a grassy strip into a Wildlife Garden.

Mearns Primary School created an Eco Science Garden on an unused strip of ground to attract more wildlife to the area, using £2,000 awarded via the local community council and more than £4,000 derived from direct fund raising efforts.



Raised bed and carved bench at Auchenback Primary

Three year commitment to Thorn Primary School boosts a Smarter Johnstone

Carts Greenspace has been working with Thorn Primary School since early 2007 to transform an uninspiring area of grassland which backs on to the railway station car park into a garden based on the school's logo, i.e. a thorn silhouette.

Now the original vision for the garden has been realised. The first phase in 2007/08 involved the construction of the path network to provide the gar-

279 people became actively involved in planning and delivering our greenspace projects in 2009/10.

den's framework, the installation of colourful benches in recycled plastic and the introduction of giant pencil posts. Next year saw BTCV Scotland's Renfrewshire Green Gym create a

butterfly garden and plant trees. Finally in 2009/10 raised planting beds were added, a bog garden created, mosaics designed and manufactured by the children (under the guidance of a local artist), a carved story telling chair and children's mushroom seats installed to establish a genuine outdoor classroom. Works to date have cost £22,500, with £19,950 of that cost coming from National Lottery Awards for All grants.

Greener Scotland gains ground at Gleniffer Braes Green Network.....

In 2009/10 Carts Greenspace took the first step towards promoting and enhancing the wonderfully rich built and natural heritage of the Gleniffer Braes Green Network by commissioning a Strategic Enhancement Plan for the area.

The results of this study have pointed the way forward in terms of management approach and an action plan which has identified 29 major project

groupings and almost 150 individual tasks. Achievement of these has now been taken over by a multi-agency Gleniffer Braes Green Network Working Group, chaired by Carts Greenspace.

Carts Greenspace is



Public consultation on Paisley Fair Monday at the Robertson Car Park, Gleniffer Braes

also spearheading the development of an Outline Conservation Statement which recognises Gleniffer's biodiversity, built heritage and archaeology, landscapes, geology and cultural connections, as well as identifying conservation works required for each sector.

Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum tackles key issues for a Healthier Scotland

The Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum evolved after a study tour which Carts Greenspace organised in August 2009. This event involved a bus trip inspecting "growing grounds" at Brediland Allotments Association, Lochwinnoch Community Garden and Fairlie Organic Community Garden. After the study tour several people wanted to exchange information, advice and practical assistance through a longer term partnership and so the idea of a Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum was born. Carts Greenspace convened an exploratory meeting in December 2009 and meetings have since occurred bimonthly. The Forum has agreed to a relatively

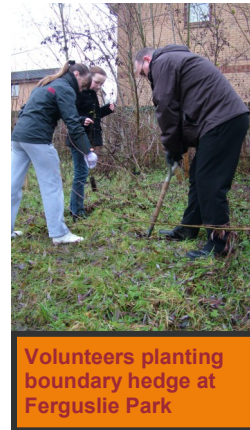
simple mission, "to increase the quantity and quality of growing ground opportunities in Renfrewshire", and has started considering the obstacles in the way of this mission and the opportunities available to negotiate a way round these obstacles.

The Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum has made some promising progress so far.

33 different organisations are represented, confirming the extent and depth of interest locally in growing grounds. These include existing growers, groups seeking new sites, council departments, other public agencies, community organisations, voluntary sector support agencies and potential

fundors of initiatives.

The most critical constraint has been identified - land supply - and the various approaches have been considered to identify new sites for growing. Most importantly, four new projects have started to make progress on the ground.



Volunteers planting boundary hedge at Ferguslie Park

How Carts Greenspace improving the green network helps generate a Healthier Scotland

Over the years Carts Greenspace has placed an emphasis on building paths for people to walk, run and ride. 216m were constructed in 2009/10. In the past decade our efforts have resulted in 5.8km of new path being built and the upgrading of a further 7.6km.

Just as much effort, however, is now going into less tangible health outcomes. In 2009/10 Carts Greenspace developed 12 projects for delivery by

407 volunteer days were provided by Carts Greenspace projects completed in 2009/10.

volunteers because local people can gain various health benefits by using their neighbourhood greenspaces - e.g. healthy exercise, fresh air and the mental health benefits derived from

socialising with people with shared interests. Our support for new allotments and other types of growing ground combines these same health benefits with an added bonus - people can take their fruit and vegetables home and engage in the benefits of healthier eating too.

All these benefits could be available to you without the need of an expensive gym membership subscription!

Generating a Greener Scotland through heritage conservation work at greenspace sites

The Carts Greenspace area contains many important heritage sites and Carts Greenspace has promoted these during 2009/10. Leaflets were produced about two of these (and copies can be obtained from the contacts overleaf): "The Geology of Rouken Glen" and "Linwood Lade: exploring its wildlife and history".

Rouken Glen is perhaps one of the most important greenspace sites and

East Renfrewshire Council has started the process of launching a Heritage Lottery Fund grant application for various conservation works. Carts Greenspace supported this process by completing an Outline Conservation Statement for the park.



Renfrewshire Green Gym volunteers tackle scrub management at Newshot Island viewpoint.

Other efforts are more direct and hands-on, e.g. habitat management at Newshot Island proposed Local Nature Reserve, protecting Boden Boo Community Woodland from damaging vehicle access, creating wildlife or eco gardens in several schools.

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**Find us at
www.cartsgreenspace.org.uk**

*placing greenspace at
the heart of regeneration*



**Before and after
photographs
taken at Mearns
Primary
School's Eco
Science Garden.**



In 2009/10 Carts Greenspace operated as a partnership between two local authorities - the Councils for East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire - and was managed by a Local Area Partnership which also included outside organisations like Go Greener, the RSPB and River Clyde Fisheries Management Trust. Day-to-day work was carried out by a team of two staff who covered an area of 444 square kilometers and responded to the needs of a resident population estimated at 266,000 people.

Carts Greenspace's basic aim is to help people to create new green-spaces and enhance existing open spaces. It followed eight guiding principles in achieving this aim:

- 1. Encouraging community participation and ownership*
- 2. Enhancing biodiversity*
- 3. Improving existing landscapes and eliminating degraded ones*
- 4. Encouraging people to use greenspace to improve their health and for informal recreation*
- 5. Fostering understanding and appreciation of the environment*
- 6. Promoting community economic development*
- 7. Creating opportunities for employment, training, work experience and volunteering*
- 8. Developing community pride.*

Encouraging community engagement in greenspaces to help build a Safer and Stronger Scotland

It is clear that many of our green-spaces will depend on the active support of their local communities if they are to have a secured future.

Much of Carts Greenspace's work has always been geared towards increasing levels of community engagement in greenspaces. Part of this is an awareness raising role and Carts Greenspace has continued to run a web site, give talks and issue newsletters and other publications in 2009/10.

Some of our projects were geared towards encouraging groups to take control of their open spaces. For example, a small scale garden project at Dunterlie Community Resource Centre in Barrhead encouraged young people to think about what they wanted from their grounds and get actively involved in the achievement of that vision.

Larger scale sites also need more di-

rect community involvement. In 2009/10 Carts Greenspace became involved with a Park Friends group for the first time, through its support of the embryonic Friends of Rouken



18th Century industrial archaeology at Rouken Glen, where our knowledge has been increased by local experts' inputs.

Glen. East Renfrewshire Council had instigated this group through a series of public meetings during summer 2009, as a means of demonstrating public support for its Heritage Lottery

Fund application. Carts Greenspace became more actively involved once the Friends became "self programming", providing technical support on issues like the drafting of a Constitution, consolidating a management committee, looking at the options for what priorities a Friends group should pursue and helping to develop a 2010 events programme.