



CASE STUDY

BISHOP'S ESTATE WOODS



**A focus for community involvement,
volunteering, education and training.**

LOCATION Bishop's Estate Woods are situated on the north east of Glasgow, with Easterhouse to the south, and the Bishop's Loch Site of Special Scientific Interest to the east.

SITE DESCRIPTION Five sites make up Bishop's Estate and are owned by Glasgow City Council. The 100 hectare woodlands are managed by Forestry Commission Scotland, in partnership with Glasgow City Council.



The woodland is situated within a large area of green belt land that comprises open farmland bordered to the south by social and private housing. The forest is split into five woodlands – Cardowan Moss Local Nature Reserve, West Maryston, Todds Well, Bishop’s Loch Local Nature Reserve and Lochend Burn.

With Easterhouse on one side and the Bishop’s Loch SSSI on the other, these sites have a diverse mixture of habitats which adds to the visitor experience and plays a vital role within the wider green network.



BEFORE WIAT

Easterhouse was built in the 1950s to provide better housing for people living in sub-standard conditions. The housing was an improvement from tightly packed tenements, but became a case study for social planners hoping to avoid the problems caused by a lack of basic amenities and transport links.

The 1960s and 1970s saw the construction of an indoor shopping centre, library, swimming pool, community centre, schools, churches and in the 1980s, a health centre. During the 1980s the tenements were replaced with detached and semi-detached houses which attracted investment, better transport links and amenities.

The woodlands had very little use, little recreational opportunity and their management was minimal. The woods are set behind housing estates, which has meant that the sites were often ignored by the majority of people and abused by the rest.

WIAT ACHIEVEMENTS

- WIAT investment in this site has seen an increase in the number of visits to the woodlands, especially from school groups and through education based activities;
- Partnership work with Glasgow City Council has been successful in reducing fly tipping and anti-social behaviour;
- There has been a significant increase in recreational opportunities with almost 10km of surfaced footpaths upgraded or built, and a map of the walks created;
- There has been a variety of community engagement activities over the years which has resulted in an increased enthusiasm for the woodlands and the opportunities that they provide for community activities; and
- Varying levels of ranger and warden presence have been trialled on site and a new 10 year FCS commitment from 2011 will ensure this continues.

“ Lots of good progress has been made, especially with the local schools. There is more progress to be made and I can see that happening at the moment with the re-engagement of the Forestry Commission. ”

Stevie, Friends of Provanhall

WIAT WORKS

Work with local schools has continued since funding was first introduced in 2004. This has included introducing nursery, primary and secondary children to the wonders of the woodlands on their doorstep. Through a combination of Forest School and bushcraft activities teachers have been supported in integrating the natural environment to their curriculum.

Following teacher training, a number of schools now feel confident enough to use the woods independently of Forestry Commission Scotland.

As well as school visits, activities such as Branching Out – a forest activities programme for adults using mental health services, Forest Kindergarten, corporate volunteering and Paths For All’s ‘Health Walks’ scheme all operate within the sites. Activities are delivered by a range of individuals and partner organisations all aimed at increasing positive use of the sites and emphasising the benefits of outdoor activities. Recent consultation and planning for future management has identified work to be carried out on site and a range of opportunities for continued community engagement.

ON-GOING COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

- Health walks;
- Bushcraft;
- Branching Out;
- Forest Clubs Education Sessions;
- Cycling trips (Glasgow City Council); and
- Training opportunities with BTCV.

“ I welcome the Forestry Commission involvement and management of the Bishop’s Estate. We locals are so lucky; we have such an interesting site on our door step which is steeped in history, is an SSSI and has beautiful scenery and walks. It’s heartening that the Forestry Commission are making huge efforts to engage with the locals and are really interested in making the Bishop’s Estate more accessible and increasing awareness of this fantastic site. ”

Eddie Andrews, Wellhouse Community Trust



TIMELINE

1998
50 hectares of woodland planted as part of a citywide woodland project by ‘Treewise’.

2004
£186,000 WIAT funding secured.

2006
Full time Community Ranger employed.

2007
Almost 10km of waymarked trails created, along with a map of the walks.

2008
Further path works are carried out to improve the quality of visitor experience.

2010
A 10 year lease is signed, signifying a commitment to the long term management of the woods.





LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

2011 is an exciting time for these sites as they will become Commonwealth Community Woodlands as part of the city's Commonwealth Games Legacy commitment. The aim is to develop sites which are not just safe and appealing, but a focus for community activities, volunteering, education and training as well as somewhere the city as a whole can be proud of.

A 10 year plan will be developed and implemented and will involve working closely with existing groups, volunteers, local authorities and other organisations. These sites will also become the gateway to the wider Gartcosh wetland park which could be of major regional significance.

KEY ACTIONS WILL BE TO:

- Create a safe, welcoming environment for all who visit;
- Develop an achievable management plan for the next 10 years; and
- Increase visitor numbers through a range of outreach activities.

If you would like to find out more about forestry in Scotland, please call 0131 334 0303 or email fcscotland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

www.forestry.gov.uk/wiat

