
Report To:	Education and Communities Committee	Date:	5thSeptember 2017
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	EDU/COM/55/17/AM
Contact Officer:	Alan McClintock	Contact No:	2444
Subject:	Auchmountain Glen Heritage Project – Feasibility Study		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the Auchmountain Glen Heritage Project and to request funding for a feasibility study to establish the viability of restoring the heritage trail.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Auchmountain Glen path travels from the start at Kilmacolm Road and follows the Glen to culminating at the Whinhill Golf Course. The Carts Burn runs through the Glen. The Glen was once a spectacular civic walkway with public architecture such as fountains and statues. Paths and bridges were well developed and maintained. A full set of archive photographs is contained in the Appendix for interest. The Glen is now neglected and suffers from vandalism and graffiti. The trees are overgrown and instead of a light and airy path there is a dark and damp atmosphere.
- 2.2 Bridges are a particular concern. The Glen is only passable up to the seventh bridge which is dangerous and unpassable. This dangerous bridge has two base plates missing and the integrity of aspects of the steel structure is questionable. Approximately four years ago the Council had each end of the bridge restricted and a warning sign erected. The dangerous bridge will be secured from public access and appropriate signage erected to warn the public.
- 2.3 The Auchmountain Volunteer Group have been active in clearing debris from the Burn and generally tidying the paths at the bottom reaches of the Glen. They have expressed an interest in developing a restoration project to extend their work to the upper reaches of the Glen. They have also expressed interest in exploring options for community transfer.
- 2.4 A Feasibility Study is required to establish the extent of work, the cost and to present to funding bodies for assistance. With the history of the Glen, it should be possible to interest the Lottery Heritage Fund.
- 2.5 The scope of the study is to identify the following:
- Land ownership and conditions
 - Structural assessment of all bridges
 - Tree and landscape management
 - Land drainage
 - Pathway reclamation
 - Erosion and prevention
 - Fencing and safety barriers (public safety)
 - Costs

- Funding partners
- Community Lease
- Legal implications

In the context of the above the study should make recommendations in respect of a 'vision' for the Glen in the context of the potential to attract external funding.

2.6 The Council has £150k allocated to the Grants for Voluntary Organisations (GtVO) budget which specifically mentioned "for support for Community Ownership/Transfer proposals". It is recommended that a sum of £15,000 be allocated to this project to fund the feasibility study with any balance being used to assist developing the project. The funding would be managed by the Council on behalf of the project.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That approval is given for an allocation of £15,000 from the Grants to Voluntary Organisation budget in the context of providing support for Community Ownership/Transfer proposals.

Alan McClintock
Technical Services Manager

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Auchmountain Glen path travels from the start at Kilmacolm Road and follows the Glen to culminate at the Whinhill Golf Course. The Carts Burn runs through the Glen.
- 4.2 The Glen was once a spectacular civic walkway with public architecture such as fountains and statues. Paths and bridges were well developed and maintained. A full set of archive photographs is contained in the Appendix for interest.
- 4.3 The Glen is now neglected and suffers from vandalism and graffiti. The trees are overgrown and instead of a light and airy path there is a dark and damp atmosphere.
- 4.4 The path is still fairly well defined but has suffered from erosion and in parts it has disappeared. The poor drainage has allowed the path to be saturated and muddy. Parts of the path are strewn with rocks and concrete slabs.
- 4.5 Bridges are a particular concern. The Glen is only passable up to the seventh bridge which is dangerous and unpassable. This dangerous bridge has two base plates missing and the integrity of aspects of the steel structure is questionable. Approximately four years ago the Council had each end of the bridge restricted and a warning sign erected.
- 4.6 The dangerous bridge will be secured from public safety and appropriate signage erected to warn the public of the safety concerns.
- 4.7 The remaining six bridges are all passable and appear sound but require a structural assessment. There is evidence of rusting on the floor plates and structure and so the integrity may have been compromised.
- 4.8 Where there were fences and steps, the timbers have rotted leaving broken steps and missing handrails.

5.0 AUCHMOUNTAIN VOLUNTEER GROUP

- 5.1 The Group first came into contact with Technical Services last year when they requested assistance in transporting a container storage unit donated by a Housing Association. The container was to be placed at the mouth of the Glen to store equipment and tools. Unfortunately this proved to be unsuccessful as the container should not be seen from the Kilmacolm Road and concealing it further into the Glen was technically impossible.
- 5.2 The Group negotiated the use of the redundant Tenants' Hall at the junction of Aberfoyle Road and Kilmacolm Road with Inverclyde Leisure. This is an informal arrangement as there is no lease. They use this to store equipment and have set up a display on fauna and flora of the Glen.
- 5.3 The Group are very active over the summer and have cleared various types of debris from the Burn. Groups of activists can regularly be seen in hi-viz attire heading up the Glen. The Group have expressed an interest in exploring options for community transfer.

6.0 FEASIBILITY STUDY

- 6.1 There is an aspiration to return the Auchmountain Glen back to its former glory and this will require a great deal of work.
 - The trees and general flora are overgrown and have to be cut back to allow light and ventilation to penetrate.
 - Pathways have to be reinstated and made safe.
 - Steps and handrails to be designed to be safe and functional.
 - Bridges to be checked and upgraded, probably replaced.

- Drainage to be introduced to prevent erosion of the paths.

6.2 A Feasibility Study is required to establish the extent of work, the cost and to present to funding bodies for assistance. With the history of the Glen it should be possible to interest the Lottery Heritage Fund.

6.3 The scope of the study is to identify the following:

- Land ownership and conditions
- Structural assessment of all bridges
- Tree and landscape management
- Land drainage
- Pathway reclamation
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- Fencing and safety barriers (public safety)
- Costs
- Funding partners
- Community Lease
- Legal implications

6.4 The Council has £150k allocated to the Grants for Voluntary Organisations (GtVO) budget which specifically mentioned “for support for Community Ownership/Transfer proposals”. It is recommended that a sum of £15,000 be allocated to this project to fund the feasibility study with any balance being used to develop this project. The Council would manage this fund on behalf of the project.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend £'000	Comments
GtVO Budget		2017/18	15	.

Legal

7.2 There are no Legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

7.3 There are no Human Resources issues arising from this report.

Equalities

7.4 There are no equality issues arising from this report.

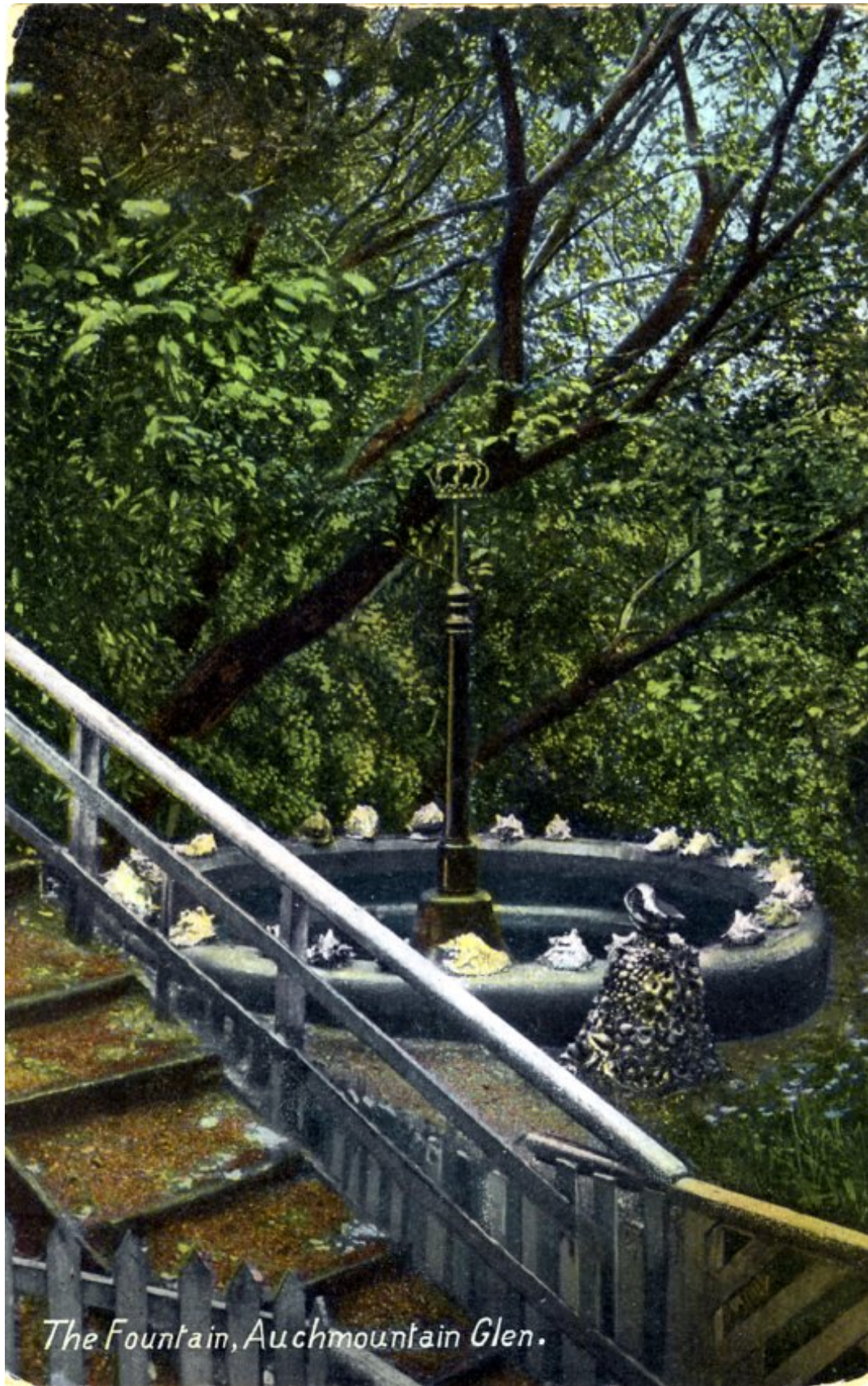
Repopulation

7.5 There are no repopulation implications arising from this report.

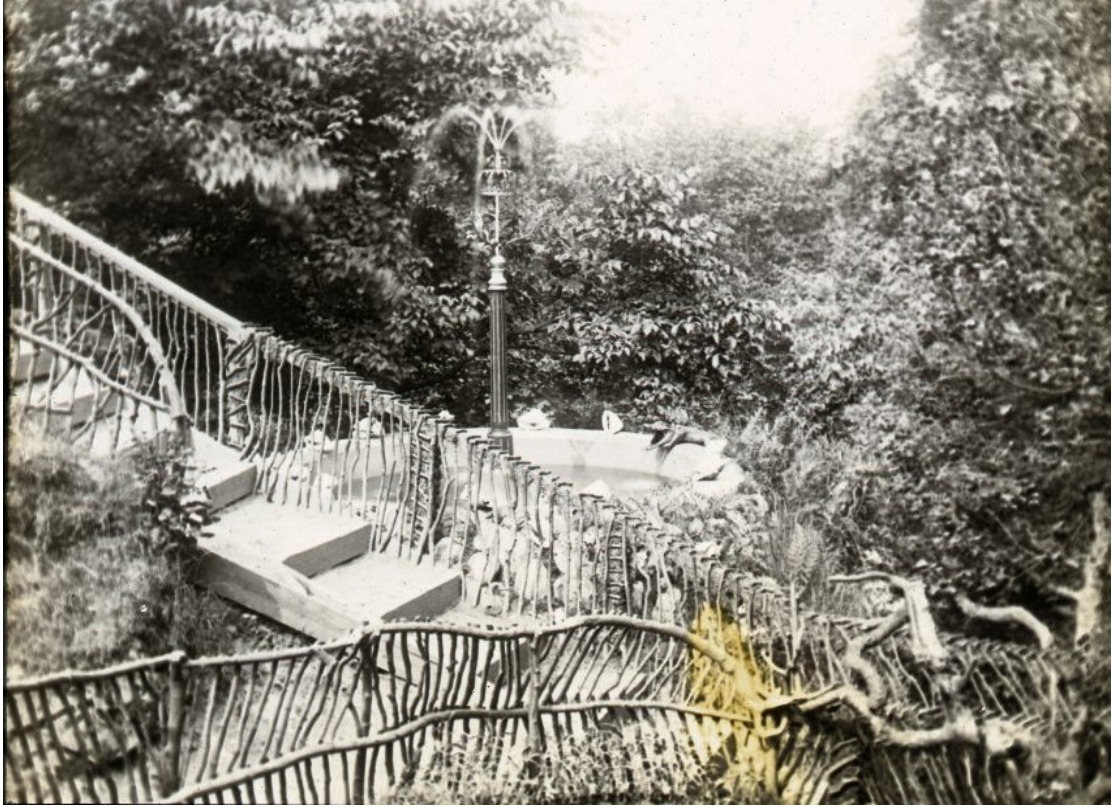
8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The Chief Financial Officer has been consulted on this report.

9.0 Appendix



The Fountain, Auchmountain Glen.







The Steps, Auchmountain Glen, Greenock.



In Auchmountain Glen,
Greenock.

