



We have set out here, our five-year plan until 2013 for the Back Braes. This has been the result of many months of work. Now we are keen to hear your ideas and views which will help us prioritise the work. You can have your say by talking to any of the committee members who will be out and about in the next few days, or by visiting our website:

<http://www.ferryglen.org.uk/links>

The plan deals with two areas:

- how we might manage the wooded area
- possible improvements to the surrounds (access paths, signs, views etc)

The Back Braes and Ferry Glen form important routes for local people to travel north to south across Queensferry – they use the paths to reach the old town and the promenade. However, this is not an easy route for visitors and those less familiar with the ways. We would like to add signs, improve the existing paths, and even open up some more.

The woodland also has good potential for health and leisure activities, and it is important for nature. If we manage it well, more local people and visitors will use it, and this in turn helps us make a case for money to keep the woodland in good order.

Social Issues

From time to time, the area is vandalised. Vandalism is one of the more serious problems affecting the Back Braes and Ferry Glen, as well as the properties close by at Station Road and Stoneycroft Road. Litterbins are a particular target, but the area suffers also from littering, dog fouling and (occasionally) fly tipping. The feel of neglect does not lend itself to civic pride.

We believe the following improvements will help people to use the path and benefit from it:

Entrances and access points

The access points are important. These are the first things visitors see. They should attract new people into the area who may wish to explore a little more or find the viewpoints. We have marked the key points on the map but here are the main access points we have in mind:

Scotmid Entrance (See point A on map)

The entrance at the edge of the Scotmid car park is dark and unattractive. We could upgrade this by removing the large-leafed (sycamore) trees near the archway. This will let in more light and we could install lighting under the archway.

We would encourage Scotmid to put in a new path along the east edge of their car park so that you could walk from the steps at the corner of the Loan straight up to the cyclepath, avoiding the cars. This area is grassed at the moment.

We would also encourage Scotmid to create a ramp on the embankment to make it easier for buggies and cycles to get up and down from Morison Gardens to the cyclepath.

Entrance to Cycleway at top of steps on Stoneycroft Road (See point B on the map)

This is a most attractive entrance/exit, providing stunning views of the river and bridges. We need to improve the path surface down to McIver's Brae, and make the access down to the cycle path less steep with a handrail on either side.

Improve existing paths

Improved access to cycle path across Catherine Terrace (C)

Some of you will be familiar with the "Brickies" at the end of Stoneycroft Road. This runs from the top of McIver's Brae over the old Catherine Terrace.

The surrounding area could also be improved. This pocket of land is owned by Dalmeny Estate, and the local plan shows it is a public, green, open space. With agreement from the landowner and the City of Edinburgh Council, we could make real improvements to this area. This could mean opening up the views, improving the lighting, putting in seating, and adding to the design of the landscape. For example, there is also scope for interpretation boards and signs.

By opening up this area, and with some improvements to the path, this route would become more visible, open, attractive, busy, and safe. It would also be a good route to/from the village for visitors arriving by bus or by rail.

Back Braes Path (D)

The history of the Back Braes can be traced back nearly 200 years. This route (the top path) has been a popular walk for local people who used to enjoy its unique panoramic views. Sadly, fewer people now use this way and it has deteriorated badly over the past 20/30 years. To encourage more people to use this path again, we would propose a few measures:

- Taking up and re-laying the flagstones
- Renovating the rusty steel platform
- Restoring the viewpoint (**H on the map**)
- Putting seats back in (possibly)
- Adding litter bins to reduce littering and dog fouling
- Cutting back the overgrown hedges and branches so that two people can walk side by side. This would also allow people to see further ahead and feel safer as a result.

New Path Links

Transverse path from the promenade (E)

We hope to re-instate the old path, which ran from the promenade near the water pumping station up to the cycleway. Historically, the path provided a connection between Hawes Pier Ferry and one of the Halts on the railway. To restore that path would give people another pleasant route up to the cyclepath and access to the Ferry Glen.

New flight of steps at the western edge of Ferry Glen (F)

We would like to put in a flight of steps with side railings running from the cycleway up towards the Bowling Club. Many people think that the blind corner near there makes this a dangerous place, particularly at night, so we would like to put a

flight of stairs as close to this point as possible to let walkers see clearly in both directions. We may also consider extra lighting here.

New access point from Stoneycroft Road (G)

At one point, Stoneycroft Road runs level with the cycle path and this is a good place to open the wall (near the St Margaret's Masonic Lodge). Opening the wall would allow walkers to get down to the High Street through Hawthorn Bank and the Vennel.

Greenery

Cycleway

On both sides of the paths, we would cut the vegetation back by one metre to give a more open feel to the place. This, in turn, would encourage walkers, joggers and cyclists to use the area more frequently.

Woodland Management

Experts suggest a “minimum intervention” approach. This means leaving the trees to grow more or less as they are, in a natural way. However, there are some trees, which may be unsafe. Public safety is important, so the Council has carried out a tree safety inspection and you can see they have marked some trees for felling. This will improve the under storey, and the extra sunlight should encourage the spread of wild flowers. We would also cut quite a lot of the ivy for the same reasons.

Now, we need your views on these ideas, and any other suggestions you would like to make. Please take the time to comment, and to encourage others to do so too. We have three weeks to complete this public participation.

It's your Ferry Glen. Have your say.

The Back Braes Planned Improvements

created by Friends of the Ferry Glen

