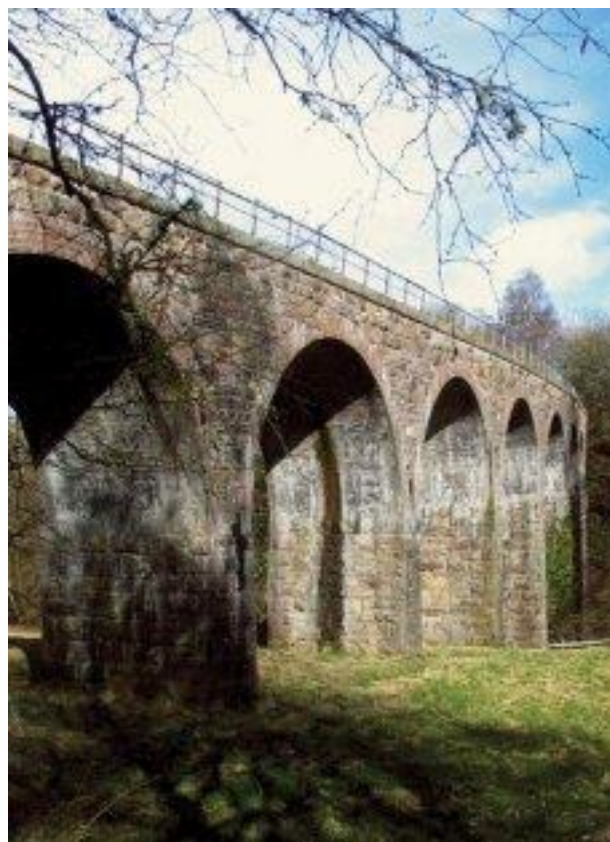


# Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway

## Management Plan 2019 -2024



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## Overview of the Management Plan

This plan will:

- Detail the vision, aims and actions to enable management over the next 5 years (2019-2024)
- Assist in applying Green Flag criteria to achieve Green Flag status.

## Our Vision

**To actively manage the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway, as a key route in Esk Valley, for the benefit of people and wildlife in such a way to ensure it provides one of Midlothian's best places to experience the natural environment.**

In producing the [Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway management plan](#) we have engaged with stakeholder groups and have recruited a site based volunteer group. Further engagement with local groups during the course of the first year of the plan will take place. These include the Friends of Roslin Glen, Dalkeith Rotary Club, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Esk Valley Trust, council officers etc.

## Site Contacts:

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## SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

### LOCATION AND OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is a 7 mile former railway line, located in Midlothian which begins in Penicuik at Valleyfield (OS Grid Ref NT237 597). The route follows the River North Esk passing through Auchendinny, Rosewell and Bonnyrigg to end at Hardengreen (OS Grid Ref NT321658), Dalkeith. See Map 1 below.

It is a National Cycle Route (196), a Core Path and in parts is classified as a Safe Route to School. Links to other path networks include the North Esk Way, Tyne Esk Trail and North Esk Cycle Loop.

Map 1 Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway



## Management and Ownership

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is owned by Midlothian Council and managed by Land and Countryside Services within the Place Directorate. Road Services take overall responsibility for tarmac sections, classed as unclassified roads.

[Midlothian Ranger Service](#), based at Vogrie Country Park, is responsible for day to day management. The Service patrols & maintains the route and organises environmental events, volunteer tasks and environmental education activities to schools and groups.

A staff structure is included in Appendix 2: Land and Countryside Staffing Structure.

## Historic Background

The Walkway follows the route of the former Edinburgh to Peebles Railway Line (see sections 4.56 for History) which was developed by Lothian Regional Council in the early 1990's with a view to 'access for all'. Midlothian Council has managed and maintained the route since 1996.



LNER Class 4 Locomotive and Carriages 1876

## SECTION 2 MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL POLICY CONTEXT

The site has strong strategic significance within the region as an active travel route connecting 4 main settlements with links in the south to the wider countryside and in the north to Musselburgh and Edinburgh. It is, in all likelihood, Midlothian's most well-used recreational facility but is also an important wildlife corridor and public open space.

### Midlothian Planning Policies

Due to the many areas of Midlothian which the route crosses there are a number of planning policies in the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2017 which apply to adjacent land. The route itself is not the subject of development proposals. The key policies applying to the route and its immediate vicinity are:

Env 1 Protection of the Green Belt  
Env 6 Special Landscape Area  
Env 14 Regionally and Locally important Nature Conservation Site

### Midlothian Single Plan

Under the theme of sustainability, the joint Council and Community Planning Partnership Plan prioritises promoting active travel and biodiversity which are the two key objectives of route management.

### Midlothian Open Space Strategy and Green Network Plan

The [Midlothian Open Spaces Audit](#) records key public open spaces within Midlothian. Each site has a PAN 65 Typology and is quality assessed in terms of access, attractiveness, biodiversity, functionality and community benefits. The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway was not audited due to the complex nature of the site and given the time constraints of the audit. It is likely to be included in the 2022 review.

The [Midlothian Green Network](#) Plan considers the walkway to be a key strategic route providing opportunities for active travel, biodiversity and recreational use to improve people's health and well-being.

### Midlothian Active Travel Strategy

The [Active Travel Strategy](#) was published in 2018 and the walkway forms an integral part of the plan with new links proposed connecting various settlements.

### Designations of the Route

The Midlothian [Core Paths Plan](#) identifies path routes throughout Midlothian. The walkway consists of the designated core paths listed below and is well served by Rights of Way providing access to and from the route.

- **No 2-42** – section from Valleyfield Pond to Beeslack Woods
- **No 2-26** – section from Beeslack Woods to Dalhousie Chesters
- **No 6-42** - section from Dalhousie Chesters to St Cyr Park Bonnyrigg
- **No 4-52** – section from St Cyr Park Bonnyrigg to Hardengreen

(Core path No 4 -34 is no longer part of the walkway due to the opening of the Borders Railway. Other alternative signed routes are now in place around this area).



The route is designated as N196 and also links cyclists to National Cycle Route 1 and forms part of the [North Esk Way](#).

### **Woodland Classification**

The route from Valleyfield Pond to Bonnyrigg is classified as broad-leaved semi-natural woodland, covering an area of 12.11 hectares. Ash and Sycamore are the dominant species with frequent Wych Elm and Hawthorn. Oak and Willow are found occasionally within the canopy.

The route forms part of the Edinburgh and Lothian's Forest Habitat Network and the riparian wildlife corridor for the River North Esk and is recognised as site of good conservation value within the Esk Valley.

### **Midlothian Biodiversity Action Plan**

The [Local Biodiversity Action Plan \(LBAP\)](#) was adopted in 2019 and contains habitat actions along the route.

Specific areas were designated along the route were designated as a Local Biodiversity Site (LBS) in 2008. These stretches are subject to ongoing management where there is council ownership.



## SECTION 3 VISION AND AIMS

### Vision

**To actively manage the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway, as a key route within the Esk Valley, for the benefit of people and wildlife in such a way to ensure it provides one of Midlothian's best places to experience the natural environment.**

Midlothian Council's Single Plan sets out under its sustainable growth priority a requirement to:

*Promote active travel and biodiversity*

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is one of Midlothian's key countryside sites for outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the countryside and contributes strongly to this objective.

In developing this management plan we have engaged with Midlothian Council Cycling and Active Travel Officer, Friends of Roslin Glen, Dalkeith Rotary Club, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, Local Volunteers and others.

### Management Aims

Ten management aims are in place to achieve the vision. Table 1 below shows how aims are linked to the eight criteria of the Green Flag Award Scheme.

**Table 1: Midlothian Council Countryside Management Aims and Green Flag Criteria**

<b>Green Flag Criteria</b>	<b>Management Aim</b>
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>	<b>Landscape:</b> To enhance the existing levels of landscape and amenity value. <b>Recreation:</b> To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.
<b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>	<b>Safety:</b> To ensure the safety of visitors and staff working on the site. <b>Legal:</b> To ensure that the site management works complies with all legal obligations. <b>Recreation:</b> To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.
<b>Well Maintained and Clean</b>	<b>Maintenance:</b> To ensure that a maintenance programme is in place to reinforce the aims of the site and meet visitor expectations.
<b>Environment Management</b>	<b>Environment Management:</b> To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles.
<b>Conservation and Heritage</b>	<b>Conservation:</b> To increase the biodiversity value of the site. <b>Cultural:</b> To protect and conserve all features of cultural significance and industrial heritage value.
<b>Community</b>	<b>Community Involvement:</b> To engage with the local community and user

<b>Involvement</b>	groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities on site and to use the area as an environmental educational resource.
<b>Marketing</b>	<b>Marketing:</b> To positively promote The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway to Midlothian residents and potential visitors to the area.
<b>Management</b>	<b>Environment Management:</b> To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles. <b>Community Involvement:</b> To engage with the local community and user groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities on site and to use the area as an environmental educational resource.



Ranger Service and LVVOA Community Event

Valleyfield Pond Penicuik

## Section 4 ANALYSIS

An assessment and analysis of the site is given below with recommendations contained within the **Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway Action Plan - Section 5.**

### Context for Improvement

Green Flag Criteria are used to assess the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway to work towards achieving Green Flag status.

### A Welcoming Place

#### Management Aims:

**Landscape:** To enhance the existing levels of landscape value and amenity value.

**Recreation:** To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive, safe and secure environment.

An important feature of any green space is to ensure visitors feel welcome. The route is well used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders travelling through the Esk Valley.

### Announcing the Route

#### Access – Physical

[SUSTRANS](#) directional signs and National Cycle Route labels 196 (1) are displayed throughout the length of route and at many side entrances, often with distances to other towns. Core Paths are signed with directional finger posts.

Main entrance points at Penicuik, Rosewell and Dalkeith have information boards showing a route map, contact details for the Ranger Service and information regarding events and volunteer opportunities. There are many options to arrive and depart along various sections by using [Lothian Buses](#).



For those arriving by car there are 3 car parks for a total of 25 cars, at Valleyfield Pond, Harper's Brae and Rosewell (Appendix 1: Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway map and leaflet) as well as parking within nearby towns and villages. All have tarred surfacing, good site lines, no access restrictions, are suitable for disabled visitors and are open 24 hours a day.

Over the past 5 years a phased upgrade of path surfacing from whin grit to tarmac has taken place to improve ease of access. The remaining path surface is a mixture of type 1 gravel, whin grit and toptrec. The entire surfaced route is approximately 2.5m wide and is suitable for cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians passing in opposite directions. Motorised vehicles are not authorised to use any section of the route unless permitted by Midlothian Council.



## Access - Social

Management of the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway addresses social access in a number of ways:

- The route is level, surfaced and 2.5m wide and therefore suitable for a wide range of visitors including wheelchair users.
- Picnic tables and seating are located in quieter parts of the route to allow for resting, reflection and picnicking.
- Local groups are encouraged to contribute to the maintenance and promotion of the site. Volunteer groups such as the Dalkeith Rotary, LCV, Green Team and Midlothian Paths Team have undertaken litter picking, paths works, vegetation removal, meadow mowing etc.
- Members from the local communities such as The Friends of Roslin Glen and other regular users of the site are encouraged to report any issues to the Ranger Service.
- Midlothian Ranger Service carry out recorded inspections on a quarterly basis to record problems and arrange ongoing maintenance, group and volunteer tasks. Additional visits are when undertaking works, leading guided walks and school group visits.

## Actions - A Welcoming Place - See Section 5

### Healthy, Safe and Secure

#### Management Aims:

**Safety:** To ensure the safety of visitors and staff working on the site.

**Legal:** To ensure that the site management works complies with all legal obligations.

**Recreation:** To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is maintained to ensure the route is a safe and secure environment for all visitors and staff. As a consequence, it is well used, which enhances the feeling of personal security.

## Health and Well Being

The route offers a range of opportunities for recreation, health and wellbeing including:

- Many links to the wider path network
- An excellent path system, suitable for all users offering a variety of routes for all fitness levels to discover and explore
- Opportunities for responsible cycling and horse riding
- Clear lines of sight along the route linking other walking, cycling and riding routes
- Signed links to long distance routes out with the site, such as National Cycle Route 1
- Attractive areas and seating suitable for quiet relaxation
- Opportunities for conservation volunteer work, environmental education and events with the Ranger Service
- Opportunities to make contact with the local community

The route is often used for school sponsored walks and annual events such as 'Walk the Line' and also hosts a number of cycling and running events throughout the year.

## **Equipment and Facilities**

The principle facilities are 3 car parks, 7 orientation panels and 3 information boards. These are inspected and cleaned by the ranger on a regular basis. There are 3 picnic sites with tables and 5 benches. Bollards, gates and barriers are installed to prevent motorised vehicle access.

Problems are reported to the Ranger Service, generally by telephone, as contact numbers are listed at main entrances. A Council wide electronic feedback system is also increasingly used by visitors.

A list of fittings and fixtures is listed in Appendix 3: Assets and Maintenance Schedule.

## **Security**

The walkway is popular with a wide range user groups and on any given day can be very busy with dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

A general sense of security is provided by the proximity of the route to local towns, villages, housing developments, colleges and schools. Tarmac sections within urban areas and the tunnels at Auchendinny have street lighting.

In the event of an emergency contact details of the Ranger Service are listed on all panels and information boards. Midlothian Council operates a 24hr Telephone Contact Service on 0131 663 7211 and a Council Incident Response Procedure is in place should a major incident occur.

The Ranger Service patrols the route on a quarterly basis and keeps a record of findings. These thorough visits, using a site inspection sheet are used to generate works and volunteer tasks as well as to spot defects. An annual visual bridge survey is undertaken by the Ranger Service along with a structural survey carried out by Roads Services once every 2 years.

Police Scotland occasionally carry out quad bike patrols to minimise antisocial behaviour. If hazards are identified, the public are made aware through signs and warning barriers, in accordance with risk assessment procedures. The Ranger Service is a partner of the Rural Crime Initiative in Midlothian.

A Neighbourhood Watch Group keep 'an eye' on the route at Valleyfield, Penicuik and report incidents to the Ranger Service or Police.

## **Health and Safety Policies**

Midlothian Council and its employees are made aware of their duties contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). All Midlothian Council employees have undertaken training in Health and Safety at Work. Specific staff undertake risk assessment, fire risk assessment, COSHH and manual handling training. Some staff are IOSH qualified.

Midlothian Council has robust safety systems in place that are audited every three years. Safe Working Systems, Risk and COSHH assessments are extensive and reviewed regularly. All policies and assessments are made available to staff on paper (in Rangers office) or electronically. Site checks, work schedule reporting forms, staff meetings and Ranger patrols identify health and safety issues as they arise. Visitor health and safety is a priority. Any major faults are reported immediately. Small scale repairs are carried out by site staff and temporary measures such as closure/site signage/fencing etc. are put in place to prevent putting the public at risk. An example Risk Assessment is included in Appendix 5: Example Risk Assessment

Key legislation relating to the Walkway includes:

The Health and Safety at work Act (1974)

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH

The Fire Safety Order 2005

The Road Traffic Act 1991

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

Control of Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004

Occupiers Liability (Scotland) Act 1960

Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

## **Control of Dogs**

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is popular with dog walkers. The route is well provided with dog bins at all the main car parks and at entrance points along the route. All litter bins can be used for bagged dog waste and are marked as multi use.

The council has a zero tolerance policy of dog fouling which is enforced by the Dog Warden who is able to enforce legislation relating to dogs and the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.

## **Actions -Healthy, Safe and Secure - See Section 5**

### **Well Maintained and Clean**

#### **Management Aim**

**Maintenance:** To ensure that a maintenance programme is in place to reinforce the aims of the site and meet visitor expectations.

### **Litter and Waste Management**

General waste bins are emptied by the Council's Landscape and Countryside Service on a weekly basis. Dog bins are emptied by Waste Services. Fly-tipping issues are reported by the Ranger Service to the Environmental Warden.

Regular users of the route often litter pick within their local area on an informal basis. Community groups occasionally arrange litter picking and conservation tasks in their areas, i.e The Dalkeith Rotary Club.

Landscape and Countryside Service litter pick from Dalhousie Chesters to Bonnyrigg/Hardengreen once week throughout the year.

All horticultural waste is recycled and is disposed of at the green waste recycling centre at Danderhall.

### **Grounds Maintenance**

The Ranger Service inspects the infrastructure of the site on a quarterly basis, which includes the main path network, fences, handrails, steps, gates and seating and will carry out any necessary remedial works as required. All work is prioritised according to risk and/or impact on the public's use of the site.

The Walkway has until recently been maintained by the Land and Countryside Service to the standards set out in the Council's Operations specification. Financial cuts mean that we cannot always guarantee that, for example, we undertake two cuts each year without ongoing request.

A maintenance schedule for all aspects of maintenance including structures can be seen in Appendix 3: Asset and Maintenance Schedule.

One-off tasks such as dealing with dangerous trees, repairs or faults are either reported and works arranged by the Area Foreman, or managed by the Ranger Service.

Examples of grounds maintenance works to maintain the width of the track and facilities include:

- Grass verges are cut on either side by 1m once in May to September along the entire route.
- Amenity grassland areas at Rosewell car park are cut 6 times per year
- The section from Rosewell to Hardengreen is cut using a hedge trimmer once in February.
- Picnic sites at Lea Farm and Rosslyn Castle Station are cut 3 times per year
- Amenity grassland areas at St Cyr Park in Bonnyrigg are cut 12 times a year
- Shrub beds at Valleyfield are pruned once per year

Trees are checked by the Ranger Service broadly in accordance, with the National Tree Safety Groups guidance, on an annual basis in April/May.

### **Building Management and Maintenance**

The Walkway has no unoccupied or habitable buildings along the route.

### **Infrastructure and Other Facilities**

There are 2 former railway tunnels at Dalmore and Auchendinny. Inspections of adopted structures which carry public roads and footways over the Walkway are carried out by Roads Services every two years. This does not apply to structures that carry the route over the North Esk. These are inspected on an ad hoc basis or by request of the Ranger Service. The last report by Road Services was carried out in 2017.

Small pedestrian bridges are inspected annually by the Ranger Service and the remaining relic structures such as the former lade at Eskbridge the wall at Valleyfield and the former station platforms are monitored whilst on patrol, by the Ranger Service. Any serious problems which cannot be undertaken by Land Services are reported to the above Structures Section of Midlothian Council as necessary. – (see Appendix 6 for example of Survey Inspection Sheet)

### **Equipment Maintenance**

All Council staff are trained in the use of tools equipment and are provided with personal protective equipment.

Fuel and chemicals are stored off site and have the relevant COSHH assessment data. Vehicles, machinery and power equipment are maintained and serviced according to a maintenance schedule by Fleet Services based at Stobhill Depot, Gorebridge.



Risk assessments and safe working systems are in place for operational activities. These are stored centrally on the Sphera data base and are available to all. Staff training records are maintained centrally and certificates are updated as necessary.

## **Actions - Well Maintained and Clean – See Section 5**

### **Environmental Management**

#### **Management Aim:**

**Environmental Management:** To ensure that the way the site is managed has a positive impact on the environment, locally and globally both now and for the future.

[Midlothian Council's Single Plan](#) commits to developing and promoting Midlothian as a sustainable place to live and work.

While the Council is working on many fronts to improve sustainability, it is recognised that the management of countryside sites often requires few inputs yet provides clear social and environmental benefits.

#### **Climate Change Adaption Strategies**

Midlothian Council is working on a number of initiatives leading towards sustainable management practices including those which are outlined in the [Councils Climate Change Framework](#) which are further detailed in the Draft Climate Change Plan which, once adopted will be available on the Midlothian Council website.

#### **Chemical Use**

Application of glyphosate is, at the time of writing, currently banned in Midlothian following a Council decision. There however some situations where in exceptional circumstances spraying can occur.

The application of chemicals is carried out by trained staff with the relevant certification. The public are made aware with signage when spraying is being carried out, which is at non-peak times.

The use of chemicals at countryside sites is restricted to glyphosate, used to control invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed. This work is undertaken as one of the key priorities within the Midlothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Occasionally tree stumps are treated with herbicides to prevent re-growth of non-native species.

#### **Peat Use**

Land Services has closed its plant production nursery and removed most of its flower beds due to successive budget cuts

The use of peat-based products is insignificant along the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway as planting is limited to a small number of native trees and shrubs unless planting fruit trees.

## **Resource Conservation and Waste Minimisation**

The purchase of materials is guided by the Council's Procurement Strategy, which aims to reduce the impact on resources. The Strategy aims to reduce negative environmental impacts where possible.

Appropriate materials are used on site and increasingly products such as reclaimed aggregates and recycled plastic instead of quarried stone and milled timber are being used. A key driver for use of recycled products is grant aid for new projects which often requires that the design and implementation of projects use sustainable and recycled products.

As part of the National Curriculum the Ranger Service provides information to schools and others on sustainability and environmental issues.

## **Recycling**

Midlothian's green waste is collected from both households and public areas. This waste is windrow composted to create PAS100 screened compost, for use as a soil improver and substitute for chemical fertilisers. Any contamination removed before the composting process begins is disposed of responsibly to a licensed non-hazardous landfill site.

To support this activity Land Services recycles all its green waste and now uses a 10" bore chipper to enable arisings from its arboriculture activities to be reused or recycled.

## **Horticultural and Arboriculture Management**

Horticultural activity along the Walkway takes place mainly at Valleyfield, Lea Farm picnic site, Rosewell Car Park and St Cyr Park in Bonnyrigg. This involves amenity grass cutting and shrub bed pruning at Valleyfield and St Cyr Park. (See section 4.3.2 for details).

The Council's Arboriculture Team undertakes tree works such as felling dangerous trees and pruning dead wood.

Tree planting is undertaken using native species. This accords with the recommendations of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Logs and woodchips arising from tree works are either used on site, given away or recycled at the Council's green waste amenity site.

## **Pollution Reduction**

Fuel and chemicals are not stored on site. Their limited on-site usage is audited through the Health and Safety Plan for the Ranger Service and Land Services. Any pollution incidents are reported using the Council's incident report forms and SEPA contacted if there are any spillages affecting water courses.

## **Water Efficiency**

There is virtually no use of water within the site due to the lack of horticultural features. The pond at Valleyfield was created as part of the housing development in the early 1990's. The pond and immediate woodland areas are being actively managed for biodiversity.

## Energy Efficiency

The Council's Transport Service, which is responsible for fleet, commits to reducing fuel usage through its fleet procurement programme. This includes a gradual roll-out of electric vehicles with electric fuel points at council buildings and premises and extend to other partners in the private and third sector.

The former railway tunnels at Dalmore Mill and Auchendinny are lit with LED lighting with a 20 year life span.

## Air Quality

The improvement in air quality is measured by the Council as part of its Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government. The Council's Fleet Service contributes to this measure by compliance to EC 91/542 emissions directive, the latest standard on air quality which applies to all Land Services and Ranger Service plant and machinery.

## Environmental Management Actions - See Section 5

## Conservation and Heritage

### Management Aims

**Conservation:** To increase the biodiversity value of the site.

**Cultural:** To protect and conserve all features of cultural significance and industrial heritage value.

The route travels through an Area of Great Landscape Value and forms part of the Local Forest Habitat Network of the River North Esk Valley, with its diverse range of habitats and associated wildlife.

In terms of the built environment, the Walkway has many unique features along its route. The most significant of the former railway structures, include the Firth Viaduct which is grade B listed and the tunnels at Dalmore and Auchendinny are grade C listed.

## Water Management

The River North Esk valley is protected under Env 6 in the Local Development Plan in recognition that the Esk Valleys are important areas for conservation, biodiversity and recreation.

The Ranger Service controls Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam located on river banks where access is possible, with volunteer groups such as LCV.



The Forth Fisheries Trust has undertaken an ecological survey of the North and South Esk (2017) with a view to enable species such as Atlantic salmon to ascend the river after almost a century. Unfortunately this project is currently not being taken forward due to land owner liability issues.

## Woodland and Trees

There is a diverse range of woodland habitat covering 12.11 hectares, including ancient semi-natural and gorge 'oak and ash' woodland at Roslin Glen along the route. Former railway embankments are dominated by pioneer species such as willow and birch, which act as wildlife corridors for a wide range of plants and animals.

Currently the management of Council woodland is undertaken by Midlothian Ranger Service. The woodland areas are surveyed using the National Tree Safety Group guidance on an annual basis. Intervention to the woodlands include:

- Removal of dangerous trees
- Small scale thinning
- Side pruning of vegetation to maintain an open corridor
- Removal of non-natives such as Laurel and Rhododendron
- Thinning of scrub such as broom and blackthorn to maintain an open corridor and site lines
- Small scale planting of trees

Adjacent landowners such Scottish Wildlife Trust at the Roslin Glen Reserve (NT275625) and The Woodland Trust at Beeslack Woods (NT245614) manage woodlands in their ownership have woodland plans and often work in partnership with Midlothian Ranger Service to address related issues such as public safety concerning dangerous trees.

## Grassland

Grassland habitats are in decline across the UK. The route has several species rich grassland areas and verges which are actively managed with volunteers for biodiversity in partnership with the Ranger Service. These areas are cut using scythes and the cuttings are raked and removed to increase wildflower diversity for the benefit of species such as bees and butterflies.

## Other Habitats

The Walkway is a wildlife corridor with a diverse range of habitats including woodlands, rivers, ponds, grasslands, wildflower meadows, scrub, hedgerows and farmland adjacent to the route.

Many of these wildlife habitats are under threat across Britain such as grasslands and ponds. This is recognised by the Ranger Service who actively manage Valleyfield Pond and the wildflower meadows at Lea farm for their biodiversity and amenity value.



Previous biodiversity projects undertaken along the Walkway include:

- Tree and hedge planting at Valleyfield, Eskbridge and Lea Farm
- Planting of native aquatic plants in and around Valleyfield Pond

- Installation of bird boxes at Eskbridge
- Clearance of blanket weed at Valleyfield Pond
- Creation of habitat piles along the route after tree felling and thinning

## Fauna



The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway provides a home for wide range of wildlife including badgers, roe deer and foxes. Brown hares are found in farm fields, butterflies can be seen feeding on buddleia and the River North Esk provides a home for otters, kingfishers, dippers and the Daubenton's bat. Railway tunnels are the preferred habitat of the Pipistrelle bat.

The pond at Valleyfield is an ideal habitat for freshwater invertebrates including great diving beetles and other species such as frogs, toads and newts. Biodiversity projects undertaken at the pond include the planting of aquatic plants which help species thrive. For example, the 9 species of dragonfly and damselfly associated with the Lothian's are found at Valleyfield Pond.

## Geological and Physiographic Features

The route lies between 70m -180m above sea level and follows the River North Esk from Penicuik to Roslin Glen. The river has cut through quaternary glacial deposits and underlying Carboniferous sand and mudstones, which form part of the Upper Carboniferous millstone grits. Exposures of sandstone, siltstone, shale and ironstone occur in a number of locations including Firth House at Auchendinny and Roslin Glen.

## Historic and Cultural Landscape

The route follows the former track bed of the Peebles to Edinburgh Railway line which opened in 1855. It was used to carry goods and passengers, operated by the North British Railway company until closure in 1962 due to decline in passenger numbers. The Firth Viaduct, spanning the North Esk is an imposing structure, built in 1872 by Thomas Bouch.

A branch line at Penicuik remained in operation serving the paper mills until total closure in 1967 as part of the nationwide Beeching cuts. The disused line became a walking and cycling route in 1983.



1930's  
Roslin Castle  
Station and today  
Courtesy of the  
Roslin Heritage  
Society



The North Esk Valley played a significant role in the industrial revolution of Midlothian, with its abundant water supply serving factories from Penicuik to Dalkeith.

Paper mills were responsible for the prosperity of Penicuik, which became known as 'The Paper Making Town', with the first; Bank Mill, established by Sir John Clerk and Agnes Campbell of Penicuik Estate in 1709. Bank notes for the Bank of Scotland were printed here.

Leith grocer, Charles Cowan, later purchased Bank Mill and opened Valleyfield Mill in 1779. 2-3 tons of high quality paper was produced per week for fine art, bank notes and writing. The novels of Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir Walter Scott were printed on Cowan paper and The Cowan Institute was constructed which is now used as the Town hall. Schooling was introduced for the children and the working age was limited to those over 13.

The Valleyfield Mills were later taken over by Reid International in 1966 and eventually closed in 1974 due to cheap imports.

Downstream, James Brown (I Feel Good) converted two cotton mills at Esk Mills in 1820 to produce coated paper for writing and printing. He also patented a method for bleaching paper in 1826. The mill closed in 1968 due to lack of investment in modern machinery and the site has been developed for housing.



Cowan Paper Mills Valleyfield Bryce Collection



Dalmore Mill at Auchendinny, founded in 1837 by William Summerville was the last mill to close in 2005 and has also been developed for housing.

James Brown Esk Mills (1821-1968) Bryce Collection 1905

Since 1974 [The Penicuik Historical Society](#) has documented the history of the papermaking industry and former railway. There is an extensive archive stored in the Town Hall in Penicuik.

The [Roslin Heritage Society](#) and [Esk Valley Trust](#) also hold historical records and information.

### **Conservation of Landscape**

The North Esk Valley is designated a Special Landscape Area in the Local Development Plan. SLA's are protected and the Planning Authority must: "*Safeguard and enhance the character and quality of landscapes which are important or particularly valued locally or regionally*"!

The Walkway falls within the Conservation areas of Roslin and the wider Roslin Glen but only for around 300m of its length.

### **Conservation of Historic Features**

There are no historic features along the walkway which are listed except for the structures that supported the former rail line.

## **Actions - Conservation and Heritage—See Section 5**

## Community Involvement

### Management Aims

**Community Involvement:** To engage with the local community and user groups to encourage their participation in decision making, practical activities and learning opportunities along the route.

Midlothian Ranger Service works in partnership with a number of community groups, local schools and a range of other organisations to foster a sense of partnership and direct involvement along the Walkway.

### Patterns of Use

The Walkway can be accessed 365 days a year. The route is very popular on a daily basis with regular dog walkers, walkers and cyclists. During school term it is used as a Safe Route to school. Weekends can be extremely busy with visitors using the site for recreational purposes and to access local amenities and attractions.

Cycle counters along the route at Campview and Dalhousie Chesters, Bonnyrigg showed that during the summer months, between the peak months of June and September, on average 700 cyclists use the route on a weekly basis. This data was requested by Sustrans, who supported the surfacing of parts of the route.

### Community Involvement in Management and Development

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is an ideal site to engage with a wide range of local community and volunteer groups given the nature of the linear route with many towns and villages situated on or near to the site.

A group of volunteers of around 10 participants is coordinated by the site Ranger and meet on a monthly basis to carry out conservation and maintenance tasks. Midlothian Paths Team carries out an annual task and the Dalkeith Rotary club occasionally help with litter picking and maintenance tasks.

Examples of conservation tasks and activities carried out on The Walkway in recent years include in partnership with schools, groups and organisations include:

- Lothian Conservation Volunteers (LCV) – An adult group who have carried out path works, fence and invasive removal.
- Edinburgh Dirty Weekenders – A university conservation group have been tree planting.
- The Orchard Centre Rowan Project– A Mental Health group who have funded and delivered works at Rosewell platform clearing vegetation and installing a bench and planters.
- Paths for All: Supporting young adults from PAVE and RUTS to gain experience before entering employment, conservation tasks undertaken include path/step construction.
- Lasswade and Dalkeith High School have been carrying out tasks to achieve Duke of Edinburgh and JAS awards on site including cutting back vegetation and clearing paths.
- Firhill School litterpick between Hardengreen and Rosewell, collecting 80 full black bags in 2019.
- Beeslack High School – whole school sponsored walk and litterpick.
- Mauricewood Primary School – Sessions with P5 based on survival and fire lighting.

This management plan is made available to community groups connected with the Ranger Service or the route as well as those involved in the overall management of the network within Midlothian Council.

Examples include Road Services, the Active Travel Officer, the Friends of Roslin Glen, Dalkeith Rotary Club, the Woodlands Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust and Esk Valley Trust.

## Events

[Ranger events](#) are promoted online and via a printed leaflet which is distributed throughout Midlothian.

Examples that have been Organised in 2019 include:

- Guided walks and led cycle rides included in the [Midlothian Outdoor Festival programme](#) of over 70 events, with over 2000 participants
- Valleyfield Nature Detectives Day – 36 visitors took part in bug hunting and pond dipping



The route is also used by several groups holding both public and group activities which include:

- Beeslack High School annual sponsored walk
- Glencorse barracks Army weekly running and training route
- Lasswade Athletic Club use part of the route for annual 10Km run
- Scurry Events hold an annual cross country challenge along part of the route
- The annual 'Walk The Line' event with over 200 participants is led by the site Ranger and is organised by the Council's Ageing Well Team.
- Cycle events led by Cycling Scotland
- Outdoor Education cycling sessions

## Environmental Education

The Ranger Service delivers environmental education to around 1000 pupils on an annual basis. We offer [FREE educational sessions](#) on various school curricular related areas linked to the Curriculum for Excellence and Tertiary Syllabus. Numbers in each session are limited to one Ranger to a maximum of 15 pupils to ensure good communication. Activities are promoted through word of mouth and online. Resource Boxes are also available to borrow, free of charge covering pond dipping, mini-beast hunting, woodland studies and nature games and activities. These are available as an educational tool to any interested group, party or individual.



Schools within walking distance of the route are targeted and specific packages have been developed to suit their needs such as conservation tasks to complete the John Muir Awards. The Ranger Service's education sessions are free of charge.



As well as curricular activities, we offer free Ranger- led sessions to Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies working towards badges. These sessions are also offered to Duke of Edinburgh groups and other local organisations wishing to visit the countryside

## **Accessibility for All**

It is a key objective to provide opportunities for access to all users of the site.

The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is regularly patrolled by the site Ranger to ensure all access routes are open, safe and fit for purpose and that any problems are quickly resolved.

Access is promoted by signage for pedestrians and cyclists and equestrian users from local paths. Midlothian Core Paths network is signed and has increased the number of signposts across the site.

The main path, car parks and picnic sites along the Walkway are accessible for wheelchair users and all abilities. The site is connected to five Core Paths (See section 2.3) and links the main towns of Penicuik, Bonnyrigg and Dalkeith. The route is part of National Cycle Route 196 which also connects to the long distance cycle path National Cycle Route 1. Equestrian users access the [Tyne Esk Trails](#) at Roslin Glen and Rosewell from the Walkway.

## **Actions – Community Involvement – See Section 5**

## **Marketing**

### **Management Aim:**

To positively promote the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway to Midlothian residents, groups and visitors to the area.

The Ranger Service works closely with Midlothian Council's Communications Section to produce branded interpretive materials to promote the site and events to a wide audience. Information relating to the site and its management and development is available online on the [Walkway](#) web pages.

### **Interpretation, Leaflets and Web Pages**

The [Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway](#) is promoted by distribution of an attractive leaflet, throughout Midlothian and contains map, information and details of facilities. This is available at the Council website, in local libraries and leisure centres.

The Walkway also features as part of routes at [Midlothian Council Web Walks](#).

Route Interpretation includes:

- Five high quality interpretation panels, with map, information and interesting natural and historic facts are located at main entrances and intersections.
- A panel of the history of the paper mills is sited at Eskbridge, Harper's Brae and was produced in partnership with the housing developer and Eastfield Primary School in Penicuik.
- Panel at Eskmills by the play park describes the route of the local nature trail and the history of the Penicuik paper mills.
- At Valleyfield Pond a panel depicts and describes a range of wildlife found there.

- 3 notice boards at Valleyfield, Rosewell and Hardengreen with events information, maps and contact numbers.

The [Esk Valley Trust](#) has developed and promoted a way-marked route known as the [The Esk Way](#), which follows part of the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway.

## Marketing Plan and Promotion

The vision for The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is:

*To actively manage The Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway for the benefit of people and wildlife to ensure it is one of Midlothian's most attractive countryside sites for Midlothian's residents and visitors to the area.*

The vision accords with the Council's Single Plan 2019, which prioritises promoting active travel and biodiversity which are the two key objectives of the Ranger Service for the Walkway.

The Marketing Actions therefore aim to further the Council's priorities and the vision for the site through clear objectives.

An outline Marketing Plan for the site is contained within Appendix 4: Marketing Plan.

## Actions – Marketing-See Section 5 and Appendix 4 Marketing Plan

## Management

### Management Aims:

**Environment Management:** To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles.

**Community Involvement:** To engage with the local, wider community and user groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities along the route and to use the route as an environmental educational resource.

## Land and Countryside Service

The Land and Countryside Service Section within the Place Directorate of Midlothian Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of green spaces in Midlothian. This remit includes parks, countryside sites such as the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway, cemeteries, allotments, woodlands, play areas and sports pitches as well as events management including gala days.

The Ranger Service, a unit within Land and Countryside Service, is responsible for countryside sites.

With regard to the management of the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway, this structure provides the clear and coherent approach required for the maintenance and improvement of the site.

## **Management of the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway**

The Ranger Service over sees the day to day management of the route and is given technical and strategic support by Land and Countryside Service.

The Land and Countryside Service section carry out the maintenance of amenity grass, grasslands and arboriculture works as well as major path repairs.

Waste Services is responsible for the collection of litter bins and other waste materials.

### **Management Plan**

The Management Plan provides opportunities for Land and Countryside Service, Road Services and the various stakeholders including elected members to contribute and understand how the site is managed. The Ranger Service oversees the implementation of the Plan.

The Management Plan includes an **Action Plan (Section 5)** which details and timetables the various improvements that have been recommended.

### **Monitoring and Review of Management Plan Implementation**

This plan is monitored and the action plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis in November. Progress is reported to the Land and Countryside Management Team.

The aim of this plan, along with the action plan is designed to implement improvements and link with the Green Flag Award Scheme, with the purpose of achieving and retaining Green Flag Status.

Methods of monitoring our progress include:

- Monitor and review of plan to meet targets set out in the Maintenance Schedule
- Monitor and review of plan to meet targets set out in the Action and Marketing Plan
- Update and records of progress within the Councils quality assurance Covalent Performance Management System
- Achievement of Green Flag and / or response to Green Flag Judge Comments
- Staff feedback, management meetings and rewards assessed through staff Competency Framework Plans
- Visitor feedback.
- Stakeholder advice

## **Section 5 - Management Actions – Action Plan**

## Actions – Management – Section 5      Section 5 – Action Plan

This action plan lists the recommendation for the management of the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway over a 5 year period. An indication of the timing of each action is given with annually meaning that the action should be repeated every year.

Key:

	Complete		Incomplete
	Ongoing		Partially Complete

NO	ACTION	WHO	TIMING	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>A Welcoming Place</b>							
	<b>General</b>							
1.	Establish <b>funding</b> (quote is approx. £5000) to install replacement <b>interpretation panels</b> at 5 locations along the route. This may take some time! Funding requests have been made to FORG and MC has identified some 'cycling' funding. Neither have been agreed and therefore no action dates are in place.	Ranger/ Cycling Officer	Ongoing	?	?			
2.	Replace damaged <b>interpretation</b> panel at Eskmillls, near play park.	Ranger	March	√				
3.	Ensure all <b>notice boards</b> display contact information, ranger events programme and other interesting details. Keep clean.	Ranger	Ongoing-quarterly	√	√	√	√	√
4.	Re paint all existing <b>entrance signs</b> across the site	Ranger	Summer months	√			√	
5.	Re-paint <b>Rosslyn Castle Station</b> platform feature and tidy surrounding slope and area.	Ranger/ School	April	√				√
6.	Arrange for dog <b>waste bins</b> to be replaced or painted where needed in agreement with Waste Services. Use combined waste bins where possible.	Ranger / MC Waste	March/April	√				
7.	Review all main <b>entrance points</b> with a view to making them more welcoming (see jobs list kept by site ranger)	Ranger		√			√	
8.	Request <b>road marking</b> / give way surface marking for cyclists at main entrances	Roads Services		√				
9.	Include sections of the route as part of <b>events</b> within the Midlothian Outdoor Festival	Ranger	Annual	√	√	√	√	√
10.	Hold an annual <b>event</b> on site, open to the community and public i.e. Walk The Line, Ranger nature Events	Ranger	Annual	√	√	√	√	√
11.	Clear platforms at Rosewell of trees and vegetation with a view to creating a <b>picnic area</b>	Ranger/ Volunteers	ongoing	√	√			
12.	<b>Patrol</b> route as and when required and carry out recorded full site inspection every 3 months.	Ranger	Quarterly	√	√	√	√	√

NO	RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO	TIMING	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>							
	<b>Health and Well Being</b>							
1	Continue to provide year round opportunities for <b>voluntary conservation</b> activities to a wide range of groups such as the Orchard Centre, LCV, Rotary Clubs, Schools and Site Volunteers	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
2	Continue to support council partners in Ageing Well to promote <b>health walks</b> such as 'Walk the Line' and other events	Ranger	Sept	√	√	√	√	√
3	Encourage pupils and staff to walk to <b>environmental education sessions</b> if located nearby. A Ranger can be made available to accompany school groups to and from the site	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
4	Offer <b>guided walks</b> along the route to a range of groups to help promote the route to be included in Midlothian Outdoor Festival.	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
5	Continue to support partners who use the site to promote <b>events</b> by having a Ranger on site on the day of the event if possible.	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Equipment and Facilities</b>							
6	Undertake quarterly whole route inspections using <b>Site Inspection</b> recording forms.	Ranger	Dec, Mar, June, Sept	√	√	√	√	√
7	Carry out <b>annual bridge inspection</b> survey and record defects. Report issues and concerns to Roads Services.	Ranger	June	√	√	√	√	√
8	Identify areas along the route suitable for 5 <b>benches</b> , as requested by members of the public, as rest places and at viewpoints. and install.	Ranger/ Volunteers	Winter	√				
9	Check car parks, gates, bollards, bins, picnic benches, seats etc. on <b>patrol</b> and during <b>quarterly site inspections</b> . Replace and repair when necessary.	Ranger	Dec, Mar, June, Sept	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Staff and volunteers</b>							
10	Continue to organise <b>maintenance and conservation tasks</b> for <b>self-led volunteers</b> . Community volunteers have adopted tasks such as litter picking, and vegetation clearance and reporting of any site issues to the Ranger Service.	Ranger/ volunteers	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
11	Ensure that Ranger Service <b>Risk Assessments</b> cover all tasks undertaken on site	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
12	Continue to work in partnership with <b>SUSTRANS</b> to maintain signage along the route and small conservation tasks	Ranger/ SUSTRANS	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
13	Explore the possibility of starting and promoting a <b>Walkway Volunteer group</b> of 6+ vols to carry out Tasks along the route and entrances.	Ranger	May	√				

14	Arrange a balanced variety of tasks for the above group on a monthly basis with a celebration event at Christmas time to thank <b>volunteers</b> . Provide snacks for 11am and issue ICE cards to all Vols, which should be checked for GDPR and updated annually.	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
15	Carry out quarterly <b>site inspections</b> (to be noted in ranger diary in advance) and record findings. Take action where needed and report problems to road services etc.	Ranger	Dec, Mar, June, Sept	√	√	√	√	√

No	RECOMMENDATIONS	Who	Timing	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>Well Maintained and Clean</b>							
	<b>Litter and Waste Management</b>							
1	Continue to <b>recycle horticultural waste</b> from site and general maintenance tasks or form habitat piles wherever possible.	Land & Countryside	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
2	<b>Monitor litter and dog bins</b> across the site and report any related issues to Waste Services/Land Services	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
3	Arrange for <b>dog waste bins</b> to be replaced or painted where needed in agreement with waste services. In the same review, make sure combined waste bins are in place rather than duplication of both dog and litter bins.	Ranger / MC Waste	Mar/ April	√				
4	Continue to monitor waste from <b>McDonalds</b> , Eskbank and maintain contact re regular McDonalds staff litter picks.	Ranger	ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
5	Arrange <b>community and school litter picks</b> as and when required or during National Spring Clean week, if possible	Ranger / Volunteers	April	√	√	√	√	√
6	Ensure weekly <b>litter picking</b> at Bonnyrigg takes place by Land & Countryside	Ranger / Land & Countryside	weekly	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Cleanliness</b>							
7	Keep the site litter and graffiti free. Report any <b>fly-tipping</b> and <b>graffiti</b> for removal	Ranger / volunteers	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
8	Wipe clean signage and interpretation across the site. Other ' <b>cleanliness</b> ' tasks should be generated via Ranger Service patrols and quarterly recorded site inspections.	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Landscape and Track Maintenance</b>							
9	<b>Prune back</b> encroaching branches along full length of the route with side arm flail in <b>February</b> each year before the nesting season – check this has been carried out satisfactorily and report issues.	Land & Countryside	February	√	√	√	√	√

10	<b>Cut verges</b> 2 x per year along the entire route <b>May</b> and <b>Sept</b> on each side of the verges to 2m. Ensure that reminders are made and that standards are understood and achieved on time. Report any lack of action.	Land & Countryside	Annual	√	√	√	√	√
11	Ensure <b>seasonal mowing</b> of <b>amenity</b> and <b>rough grassland</b> areas across the site takes place on scheduled basis. Ensure that Landscaping Services are reminded of requirements and have carried out the works to a <b>satisfactory standard</b> .	Land & Countryside	See schedule	√	√	√	√	√
12	Undertake <b>drainage works</b> to preserve path surfaces – Arrange contractor for drainage issues at <b>Rosewell</b> . Undertake minor infilling and drainage works when needed along full route. Monitor problem areas and manage problems through raising issues or carrying out minor repairs	Ranger/Land & Countryside/ /Volunteers/ contractor	Jan – Rosewell ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
13	Maintain <b>track surfacing</b> to ensure 3m wide solum and good coverage of surfacing. Report significant defects and carry out minor repairs wherever possible.	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
14	Continue to <b>upgrade</b> and maintain the section from <b>Woodhouse lee/Firth Viaduct to Rosewell</b> Car Park by widening track bed and infilling puddles.	Ranger / volunteers/ Landscape & Countryside	Ongoing	√	√			
15	Maintain all vehicles and equipment as per <b>fleet</b> maintenance schedule	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√





No	RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO	Timing	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>Environmental Management</b>							
	<b>Chemical use</b>							
1	Keep updated on council's position on use of <b>pesticides and herbicides</b> . Arrange to spray <b>Firth Viaduct</b> with 'Garlon', if possible annually in <b>April / May</b>	Land & Countryside	Under review April / May	?	?	?	?	?
2	Request control of notable <b>invasive species</b> along the route when required i.e. giant hogweed.			?	?	?	?	?
	<b>Waste Minimisation and Peat Use</b>							
3	Use <b>recycled</b> products on site wherever possible.	Land & Countryside /Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
4	Maintain consistency when ordering new products i.e. bins, so as all can be maintained / emptied in the same way.	Land & Countryside /Ranger	ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
5	Source all plants of local provenance using peat free compost where possible	Land & Countryside	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Energy Efficiency</b>							
6	Continue to use <b>LED lighting</b> in tunnels	Roads Services	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Conservation and Heritage</b>							
	<b>Woodland Ecology</b>							
1	Maintain all newly <b>planted trees</b> until fully established by hand weeding, removing tree tubes etc.	Ranger	Annually	√	√	√	√	√
2	Construct <b>habitat piles</b> and leave logs as <b>dead wood</b> , when works / tasks of felling and running are taking place.	Ranger	ngoing	√	√	√	√	√
3	Identify <b>dangerous trees</b> by undertaking annual <b>tree survey (April)</b> and during Ranger Service patrols and quarterly site inspections. Report dangerous trees to 'Arboriculture' as high priority, to remove.	Ranger/Land & Countryside	April and ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
4	Programme <b>felling works</b> to remove encroaching trees along the route with tree Team Foreman – 1 section or more per year to maintain 3m track base and to improve sight lines. Arrange with Arbor Foreman to carry out tree works in sections annually. Year 1: <b>Hardengreen and Burnbrae</b> Year2: <b>Burnbrae and Dalhousie Chesters</b> Year 3: <b>Penicuik at Eskmills</b>	Ranger/Land & Countryside	Annually	√	√	√	√	√

5	Identify <b>dangerous dead wood</b> within tree canopy and take remedial action as required along the route if dangerous	Ranger / Land & Countryside	April and Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
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No	RECOMMENDATIONS	Agents	Timing	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>Other Habitats – Grasslands, Ponds and River</b>							
7	Maintain wild <b>flower meadows</b> at <b>Lea Farm</b> using scythes to cut areas. Rake cuttings to remove nutrient ( <b>March</b> ).	Ranger/Volunteers	March	√	√	√	√	√
8	<b>Control blanket weed</b> at <b>Valleyfield Pond</b> . Use netted barley straw and continue to monitor – <b>March / April</b>	Ranger/Volunteers	March / April	√	√	√	√	√
9	Maintain <b>orchard trees</b> (x4) <b>Dalhousie Chesters</b> i.e. weeding, pruning - <b>May</b>	Ranger/Volunteers	Spring	√	√	√	√	√
10	<b>Monitor invasive species</b> along <b>river banks</b> and track. Control where possible i.e. giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam.	Ranger		√	√	√	√	√

NO	RECOMMENDATION	WHO	Timing	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>Community Involvement</b>							
	<b>Patterns of Use</b>							
1	Undertake a small <b>visitor survey</b> on site, with <b>volunteers</b> to increase knowledge of no's / types of user.	Ranger / Vols	2020/21 various		√			
	<b>Community Involvement in Management and Development</b>							
2	Update <b>local community and stakeholders</b> on production of <b>management plan</b> and actions - <b>Jan 2020</b>	Ranger	Jan		√ Updating Plan	√	√	√
	<b>Educational Facilities</b>							
3	Continue partnerships with <b>schools and groups</b> by providing conservation and maintenance tasks, environmental education sessions and guided walks.	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√
	<b>Informal Education</b>							
4	Include the route in Ranger Service annual <b>events programme</b> – pond dipping & mini beast hunt and Bat walk <b>2019 and 2020</b>	Ranger	Annual	√	√	√	√	√
5	Organise a <b>bat walk</b> , along the route a part with local community groups ( <b>LVVOA</b> ) – <b>2020</b>	Ranger			√			
6	Continue to respond to requests for <b>guided walks and activities</b> on demand from local groups	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	

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NO	RECOMMENDATION	WHO	Timing	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	<b>Marketing</b>							
	<b>Information Provision and Interpretation</b>							
1	Continue to print and <b>distribute site leaflet</b> widely ( <b>Mar-April</b> )	Ranger	Mar/April	√	√	√	√	√
2	Promote the route using Midlothian Council <b>web pages</b> as a multi-use facility for recreation, access and	Ranger	Ongoing	√	√	√	√	√

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	travel.							
3	Include the site in walking and cycling routes as part of the <b>Midlothian Outdoor Festival</b> .	Ranger	Annually	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<b>Management</b>							
1	Make this management plan available online and to interested groups, volunteers and council staff involved in actions.	Rangers		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Implement Green Flag Management Plan and Actions	Rangers	Ongoing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Review and update this plan on an annual basis <b>(Dec/Jan)</b>	Ranger	Dec/ Jan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Scottish Outdoor Access Code**

Know the Code before you go... enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly.

Everyone has the right to be on most land and water for recreation, education and for going from place to place providing they act responsibly. These access rights and responsibilities are explained in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.



The key things are:

**When you're in the outdoors**

- take personal responsibility for your own actions and act safely
- respect people's privacy and peace of mind
- help land managers and others to work safely and effectively
- care for your environment and take your litter home
- keep your dog under proper control
- take extra care if you're organising an event or running a business

Find out more by visiting [www.outdoor-access.scotland.com](http://www.outdoor-access.scotland.com) or phoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.

Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway is patrolled and managed by Midlothian Ranger Service. Please act responsibly and do not damage or remove any plants or animals. Please do not drop any litter, and clean up after your dog. Thank you.

**Midlothian Ranger Service**

Vogrie Country Park, Goswethage,  
Midlothian EH23 4NU.  
Tel. 01875 921990

**PLEASE REMEMBER**

- No Firearms
- No Fires
- No Swimming
- No Fishing



Translations and larger format can be provided on request: contact 0131 270 7500



The first paper mills were established at Dalrymfield in 1779 by Charles Cousan, a former grocer from Leith. Paper produced by the Cousan family was used to make bank notes, writing and art paper. Sir Walter Scott's novels were printed on Cousan paper. Cheap imported paper forced the family to sell up in 1966. The new owners closed the mills in 1974 due to dwindling profits.



Roadlyn Castle Station was one of five busy rural stations along the Penicuik Railway branch line. Opened in 1872, it closed to all traffic in 1959.



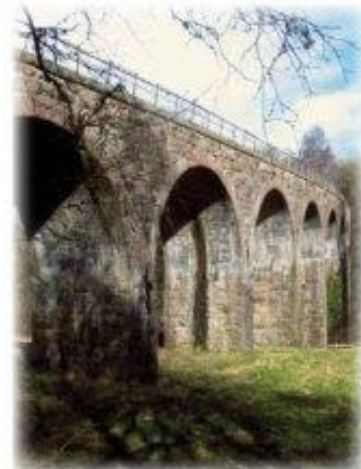
Now housing now stands on this former industrial site. Eskmill had the first cotton mill in Scotland, built in 1775. In 1811 it was used during the Napoleonic wars to house soldiers who were guarding 6,000 French POWs based at Dalrymfield. At the time it was the largest POW camp in Scotland.



Today the former platforms at Roadlyn Castle Station and Lea Farm, are perfect places to stop for a peaceful picnic, amongst the wildflowers on your journey along the Walkway.



# Penicuik to Dalkeith



## Walkway



### Appendix 1: Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway Map and leaflet

## Penicuik-Dalkeith Walkway

Welcome to the Penicuik - Dalkeith stretch of the former Edinburgh - Peebles railway line, a 11.5 mile linear route that passes through many of Midlothian's historic towns and villages. The gentle gradient and nature of the route allows easy access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders to explore and enjoy the spectacular landscapes and water attractions of the county.



**Railway Embankments**

Since the closure of the railway line in 1967, nature has created an intimate wildlife corridor with a diverse range of habitats. A carpet of ferns, rushes and mosses dominates the embankments, while open verges are ideal for grasses and wildflowers.

Buddleia, a butterfly favourite, readily colonises vacant spaces on walls and old platforms.

**The Penicuik Railway**  
Opened in 1873 to goods and passenger trains, the branch line served the paper mills along the River North Esk, transforming the economy of Penicuik. In 1876 North British Railway took over the running of the line for several years. Decline in passenger numbers in the mid-twentieth century led to closure in 1957, with freight trains continuing until 1966. The line finally closed to all traffic in 1967.

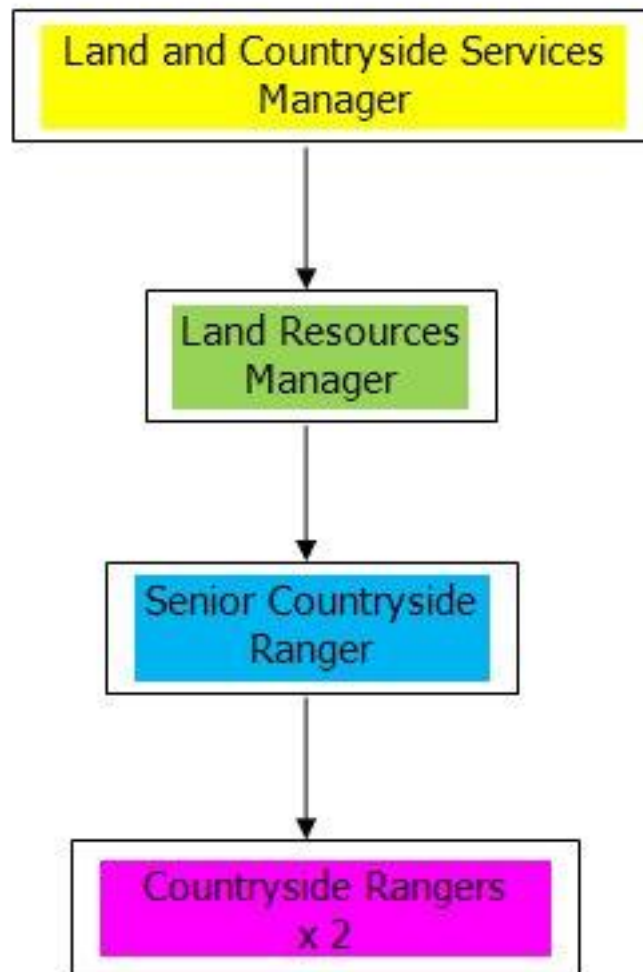
**Farmland and Hedgerows**  
80% of Midlothian's land is dedicated to arable, dairy and hillside sheep farming. Farmers have influenced the appearance of the landscape we see today. Wildlife adapts to this environment by building homes in hedgerows, field margins and small wetland areas. Well-managed semi-rural grasslands are a favourite home and food source for Skylarks and Brown Hares.

**The River North Esk**  
From its source in the Pentlands Hills, the river meanders through the Esk Valley, flowing into the Firth of Forth at Musselburgh. As you stroll followed by Midlothian's industrial past, the river now is home to a rich variety of wildlife, including the shy Otter and the aquatic-looking Kingfisher.

**Places of Interest**

- ★ Places of Interest
- 🚗 Bus Stop
- 🏠 Public Area

## Appendix 2: Land and Countryside Staffing Structure





### Appendix 3: Assets and Maintenance Schedule

	FIELD/TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
<b>BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND STRUCTURES</b>	<b>Property/Built Environment</b>						
	There are no buildings across the site	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Bridges &amp; Structures</b>						
	Bridge of River North Esk	Valleyfield	Item	2	Inspection as per Road Structures Survey Annual Ranger Service visual inspection	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures
	Bridge over the North Esk	Eskbridge	Item	1	As above		Road Structures
	Bridge over mill lade	Valleyfield	Item	1	As Above	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	Bridge over River North Esk	Beeslack Woods	Item	2	As Above	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures
	Bridge over River North Esk	Auchendinny	Item	1	As above	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures
	Bridge over A 7 Trunk Road	Hardengreen	Item	1	As above	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures
	Viaduct over River North Esk	Firth House	Item	1	As above	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures
Tunnel	Auchendinny	Item	1	As above	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures	
Tunnel	Woodhouselee	Item	1	As above	2 yearly cycle Annual	Road Structures	
Wooden Pond Platforms	Valleyfield Pond	Item	2	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service	
Brick/Stone Platforms	Lea Farm, Rosslyn Castle Station, Rosewell & St Cyr	Item	6	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service	
Culverts	Gleanlea, Rosslyn Castle, Thicket, Chesters	Item	5	Inspection as per Road Structures Survey	2 yearly cycle	Road Structures	
<b>Boundary Walls &amp; Fences</b>							
Post and Timber fence	Valleyfield Pond -Beeslack Woods	Lin m	75	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service	
Post and Timber fence	Rosewell Car Park areas	Lin m	25	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service	
Post and Wire fence	Valleyfield Pond-Hardengreen	Miles	10.5	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service	
Chain Link fence	Firth Viaduct	Lin m	210	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service	



	FIELD/TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
	<b>Paths</b>						
	Whin 3.0 m wide path	Valleyfield Pond-Rosewell Car Park	Miles	2.75	Drainage and repairs as required	Annual	Ranger Service/Volunteers
					Verges cut 1m either side	2 times per year	Area Foreman
	Asphalt 3.0 m wide path	Valleyfield-Dalmore Mill	Miles	1.62	Drainage and repairs as required	Annual	Ranger Service/Volunteers
					Verges cut 1m either side	2 times per year	Area Foreman
	Asphalt 3.0 m wide path	Rosewell Car Park-Hardengreen	Miles	2.63	As Above	2 times per year	Area Foreman
	Informal Grass Paths	Eskbridge-Valleyfield	Lin m	376	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	<b>Car Parks</b>						
	Asphalt surface car park-7 spaces	Valleyfield Pond	m <sup>2</sup>	151.62	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	Asphalt surface car park-10 spaces	Eskbridge/Harpers Brae	m <sup>2</sup>	161.50	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	Asphalt surface car park-8 spaces	Rosewell	m <sup>2</sup>	153.74	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	<b>Interpretation Boards etc</b>						
	Wooden Information Shelter	Valleyfield Pond, Rosewell Car Park, Hardengreen	Item	3	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	A0 size metal framed interpretation panel	Across site	Item	7	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	A1 size interpretation panel on shelter	Eskbridge Play Park	Item	1	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	A1 size interpretation panel in Cairn	Eskbridge/Harper's Brae Car Park	Item	1	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	<b>Seating and Bins</b>						
	Multi-use bins	Across the site	Item	15	Emptied	Weekly	Waste Services/Land Services
	Dogs bins	Across site	Item	8	Emptied	2 Weekly	Waste Services
	Plastic recycled picnic tables	Picnic areas	Item	5	Recorded Patrol	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	<b>Gates</b>						
	Metal Gates	Across the site	Item	3	Painted when required	3 monthly	Ranger Service
	Wooden Gates	Beeslack Woods	Item	2	Recorded Patrol		Ranger Service

	FIELD/TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
<b>LAND USE</b>	<b>Trees and Woodlands</b>						
	Woodland Edge and Tree Corridors	Across site	N/A	N/A	Check for dangerous trees and report to Council's Tree Squad supervisor for action	3 monthly patrol	Ranger Service/Tree Squad
	Woodland Edge and Tree Corridors	Across site	N/A	N/A	Prune and cut back over hanging branches	Annually	Ranger Service/Volunteers
	Woodland Edge and Tree Corridors	Across site	N/A	N/A	Flailing of trees and scrub	Annually - Feb	Area Foreman
	Native Broadleaved Woodland and Hedges	Valleyfield Area	N/A	N/A	Remove tree stakes and tubes once tree have established, plant as required	Annually	Ranger Service/Volunteers
	Shrub Beds	Valleyfield Pond	N/A	N/A	Prune shrub beds and remove cutting	Annually	Area Foreman
	<b>Grass Areas</b>						
	Amenity	Valleyfield Pond, Picnic sites	m <sup>2</sup>	291.93	Cut with ride on mower	Apr-Nov x 8	Area Foreman
	Rough Cuts	Rosewell Car Park	m <sup>2</sup>	414.95	Cut with Scag machine/strimmer	May-Oct x 6	Area Foreman
	Wildflower Meadows	Lea Farm	m <sup>2</sup>	857.63	Cut with Scag machine/strimmer	Annually on spring/ autumn rotation	Area Foreman
	Grass verges (See Paths)	Across the site	Miles	10.5	Cut with ride on mower twice	May-September	Area Foreman
<b>Plantings</b>							
Bulb planting	Valleyfield Pond	Lin	50	Strim die back from bulbs at entrance and around the pond areas	Late June	Area Foreman	

	FIELD/TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
	<b>Other Activities</b>						
	Control of Invasive Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam	Across site	N/A	N/A	Knotweed is stem injected or sprayed with Glyphosate  Balsam is hand pulled	Annually  Annually	Contractors/Land Services  Ranger Service/Volunteers
	Litter Picking	Across the site	N/A	N/A	Patrol	3 monthly and when groups are available	Ranger Service/Volunteers/Land Services

## Appendix 4: Marketing Plan

### Vision

**To manage and improve the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway as a key site within the Esk Valley for the benefit of people and wildlife in such a way as to ensure it provides one of Midlothian’s best places to experience the natural environment.**

The vision accords with the Council’s Corporate Plan which aims to:

- *Improve people’s health and well-being*
- *Conserve and improve Midlothian’s natural environment and*
- *Deliver actions identified in the Midlothian Biodiversity Action Plan*

The Marketing Plan therefore aims to further the Council’s priorities and the vision for the site through clear objectives.

	<b>Marketing Actions</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
1	<b>Achieve Green Flag</b> If successful, this represents an opportunity to promote the route and activities taking place with press releases. The award would be displayed at main entrance sites.	All partners	√			√	
2	Seek funding to update and install 5 <b>interpretation panels</b> to replace those that are now out of date due to route changes made by the Waverley Line.	Ranger Service Communications Cycling officer	√	√	?	?	?
3	Assess the possibility of delivering a small <b>visitor survey</b> on site with volunteer interviewers with a view to improving knowledge of no and type of users	Ranger Service vols		√			
4	Distribute route <b>leaflet</b> annually to Midlothian libraries, leisure centres ( <b>Feb</b> ) and other venues on request.	Ranger Service	√	√	√	√	√
5	Continue to review and update the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway landing <b>web page</b> on the MC Council website. Ensure map, leaflet and management plan ( <b>Dec</b> ) are up to date and available.	Ranger Service Communications Admin Support	√	√	√	√	√

	<b>Marketing Actions</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
6	Maintain 3 <b>information boards</b> and update regularly with ranger events info, contacts and volunteer opportunities.	Ranger Service	√	√	√	√	√
7	Include the route within the annual <b>Midlothian Outdoor Festival (Aug)</b> programme to promote healthy activity and active travel for all.	Ranger Service	√	√	√	√	√
8	Prepare <b>press releases</b> and other <b>publicity</b> information associated with new initiatives to promote the site and the service to internal and external stakeholders.	Land Services Ranger Service communications	√	√	√	√	√
9	Promote Ranger free <b>Education Service</b> to local schools to use the site an educational resource via word of mouth and web pages	Ranger Service	√	√	√	√	√
10	Promote Ranger <b>events</b> through web pages, Facebook page, Ranger Events leaflet and information board posters.	Ranger Service	√	√	√	√	√
11	Continue to promote <b>volunteer opportunities</b> and activities through press releases, posters, Facebook page and word of mouth	Ranger Service	√	√	√	√	√

## Appendix 5: Example Risk Assessment

DATE OF ASSESSMENT		2015		Midlothian Ranger Service		ACTIVITY: <b>PLANNED FIRES</b>	
<p>Group Supervision is key to safety when lighting and working around fires. The Ranger Service will work with no more than 15 young people, with at least 2 other responsible adults, supplied by the visiting group. The group leader (teacher, scout leader etc) is responsible for pupil and group behavior. If the Ranger feels that behavior is not appropriate, the activity will not be undertaken or stopped.</p>							
Activity / Situation / Hazard	L	S	Score	Control Measures	Result		
Contact with flames	4	4	16	When teaching fire lighting make sure instructions are understood and followed Ensure long hair is tied back and loose clothing is secured Matches will be distributed by the leader and collected once fire is lit Anything thrown on the fire stays on the fire. No burning sticks etc are to be removed Ensure there are no trip hazards nearby Nobody should walk over the fire Carry a fire blanket and first aid kit	A		
Smoke inhalation	4	4	16	Site fire in well ventilated area	A		
Flammable liquids	4	4	16	Keep vehicles and any flammable liquids / gas at least 30m from fire No flammable liquids should be used to start or increase a fire	A		
Fire spread	4	4	16	Do not light fires in very dry or excessively windy weather Ensure 1 person is attending the fire at all times Do not light fires directly under trees Keep a debris free zone around the fire, allowing nothing to catch in this area Allow a fire to die down before the end of an activity If appropriate put the fire out by turning in and dousing with water Only leave fires burning where there is no risk of spreading	A		
Smoke obscures hazards	4	4	16	Fire will not be lit by buildings or near roads	A		
Campfire cooking	4	4	16	Use protective gloves when moving pans / kettles from the fire Ensure all food is thoroughly cooked	A		
Site hazards	4	4	16	Assess and discuss potential site related hazards i.e power cables, steep slopes, poor weather, extreme temperatures, fast moving water, dangerous trees etc. Be prepared to alter or cancel activities.	A		
<b>L = likelihood of injury</b>				<b>S = severity of injury</b>		<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Result</b>
10 Likely or frequent, occurs repeatedly, to be expected				10 Fatalities (more than one)		L x S	A = Acceptable C = Controlled adequately N = Not Controlled adequately F = Further Action Required
8 Probable, not surprised, will occur several times				8 Fatality			
6 Possible, could occur sometimes				6 Major Injury			
4 Remote, unlikely, though conceivable				4 Minor Injury			
2 Improbable, so unlikely that probability close to zero				2 Damage to property/equipment			
0 Zero Probability				0 No injury/damage to property			

## Appendix 6: Example of Site Inspection Sheet

MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL – LAND SERVICES

SAFETY INSPECTIONS OF STRUCTURES

Structure Ref & Name	B5 Westerhaugh Bridge					
	Date & initials	Date & initials	Date & initials	Date & initials	Date & initials	Date & initials
element	14/6/17 DS	20/8/17 BB	6/12/17 DS			
<b>Parapets or handrails</b>	ok	1	ok			
<b>Approach fences</b>	Ok	Ok	Ok			
<b>Wooden deck boards</b>	Ok	Ok	1			
<b>Bituminous surfacing</b>	1	2	2			
<b>Gravel surfacing</b>	Ok	Ok	Ok			
<b>line and level of the main deck or beams</b>	ok	ok	Ok			
<b>loose stones, brick, concrete</b>	ok	ok	Ok			
<b>other</b>	-	-	-			
<b>Comments</b>	1. Small pothole at west end	1. Parapet post slightly loose at NE corner. 2. Small pothole at west end	1. moderate crack in board at mid span. 2. Small pothole at west end			
<b>Repairs</b>		Parapet post repaired 1/9/17.				

