

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 20 September 2005

UNALLOCATED FOOTBRIDGES

Report By Executive Director of Development & Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to :-

- (a) advise the Committee that there are a number of footbridges in East Ayrshire that were maintained by the former Strathclyde Regional Council and District Councils, but it is not known which Department is now responsible for them.
- (b) request the Committee to note that the Roads Division is willing to formally adopt these footbridges if the appropriate funding for repair and maintenance can be allocated.
- (c) to consider as part of the 2006/07 budget setting process, the allocation of additional funding to undertake the necessary repair/replacement programme for these footbridges.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Prior to the formation of East Ayrshire Council, the former Regional and District Councils were responsible for a number of footbridges. Those footbridges owned by Strathclyde Regional Council's Roads Department automatically passed to East Ayrshire Council's Roads and Transportation Division at reorganisation in 1996.
- 2.2** However, those footbridges that belonged to, or were maintained by Strathclyde Education Department, Kilmarnock and Loudoun District Council and Cumnock and Doon Valley District Council would have become the responsibility of some other succeeding Department within East Ayrshire Council.
- 2.3** Included in the above is the Old Lugar Bridge at Ochiltree. This Class B listed bridge was the subject of a previous Development Services Committee Report, 1/6/99, when the Committee was advised that the Council had taken ownership of the bridge. This was in compliance with the serving of a Compulsory Purchase Notice under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1972, by the previous owner.
- 2.4** This bridge which now serves as a footbridge requires substantial repairs, estimated at £100,000 and, like the others, no Department has been formally allocated responsibility for its maintenance.

- 2.5 There may also be other footbridges of which the Roads Division are presently unaware.
- 2.6 The Roads Division are generally the first port of call for anyone with a query or concern about a footbridge, whether it is the Department's responsibility or not.
- 2.7 Since reorganisation the Roads Division have carried out ad-hoc inspections on these footbridges. However, no planned maintenance has been carried out on them. On occasion, emergency repairs have been carried out in the interest of public safety.

3. SEARCH FOR RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

- 3.1 Since Local Authority reorganisation in 1996 the Roads Division has made numerous enquiries of the various Departments of the Council to try and establish ownership and maintenance responsibility. This has brought some success but on the whole the majority of the former District Council footbridges remain unassigned to a particular Department. There are still 16 Footbridges for which no responsible Department has been identified. (Refer to footbridge list in Appendix A).
- 3.2 A last resort would be to instruct the Legal Section to carry out a title search. They have indicated that they could do this, although any legal search can be a protracted exercise. Obviously, there is a cost associated with this and depending on what records are available a definitive answer may or may not be forthcoming. Also, the issue of necessary maintenance costs discussed under paragraph 5 would still arise.

4. STRUCTURAL CONDITION OF THE FOOTBRIDGES

- 4.1 A programme of detailed visual inspections has recently been undertaken on all footbridges known to the Roads Division, whether they are the Department's responsibility or not. This has been done in order to ascertain their current condition. From this inspection a cost estimate of the necessary repairs has been established. (Appendix A).
- 4.2 4 of these bridges cannot be economically repaired and will have to be replaced. As these bridges are on well established pedestrian routes (3 have designated Right of Way status), removal would be difficult, and would still involve costs for their removal and the restoration of the sites.

5. COSTS OF ESSENTIAL REPAIRS/REPLACEMENTS

- 5.1 The estimated cost of necessary repairs/replacement of the former 16 No. SRC / District Council footbridges is **£278,000**. (Appendix A).
- 5.2 From the visual inspections carried out it is not anticipated that any of the bridges are in immediate danger of collapse. Nevertheless they are all

showing varying degrees of disrepair and neglect and visual inspections are clearly limited to obvious defects. Hidden/latent defects could require sudden and costly intervention. However, if the repair/replacement programme was spread over 6 years, a priority programme could be drawn up at an estimated cost of **£47,000** per annum.

5.3 To maintain the 16 footbridges in a safe condition thereafter, an estimated annual revenue budget of **£10,000** would be required.

5.4 This figure is based on the nationally accepted figure of 1.1% of replacement cost of the footbridges. The estimated replacement cost is £887,000 for the 16 footbridges.

6. PROPOSALS

6.1 To resolve the current unsatisfactory situation whereby a significant number of footbridges in East Ayrshire are not being formally inspected or maintained in any way, it is proposed that the 16 footbridges listed in Appendix A be formally allocated to the Roads Division.

6.2 However these footbridges are all in need of varying degrees of maintenance work and the Department simply does not have the available budget to include such repairs in maintenance programmes. Indeed since local government reorganisation in 1996 very little maintenance work has been carried out on the Roads Division's own footbridges due to budget pressures.

6.3 It is therefore important to note that the Roads Division would be unable to adopt and maintain these footbridges without the allocation of appropriate resources.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The additional cost in relation to the adoption and maintenance of these additional footbridges will require to be considered as part of the 2006/07 budget setting process.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 East Ayrshire Council is responsible for the maintenance of the footbridges in question. However because the responsible Department is currently unknown, the footbridges are not being formally inspected or maintained by anyone. The Council is therefore exposed to a risk of claims.

8.2 All of the bridges are on well established pedestrian routes, but East Ayrshire Council, as Roads Authority, would be faced in due course with an overriding duty to close particular bridges on safety grounds.

9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

9.1 Most of the bridges are essential pedestrian links in the community, and closure or removal of the bridges as they deteriorate below acceptable safety levels would severely affect the Council's access, social inclusion and non-discrimination policies.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The Committee is requested to:

- (a) Note that there are a number of footbridges in East Ayrshire that were maintained by the former Strathclyde Regional Council and District Councils, but it is not known which Department is now responsible for them.
- (b) note that the Roads Division is willing to formally adopt and maintain these bridges subject to the allocation of appropriate resources through the 2006/07 budget setting process.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development & Property Services

18 September 2005
SG/AEI/YK

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Old Lugar Bridge, Ochiltree,
Development Services Committee – 1 June 1999
Appendix A

For further information please contact Alan Ierland on 01563 576310

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF FORMER SRC AND DISTRICT COUNCIL FOOTBRIDGES WHICH ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL BUT HAVE NO ALLOCATED RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

No.	Structure Name	Location	Former Maintenance Authority	Cost Estimate for repairs or replacement
1	INSTITUTE AVENUE F/B	CATRINE	C&DVDC	£10,000
2	ST. CUTHBERT STREET F/B	CATRINE	C&DVDC	£22,000
3	ST. CUTHBERT STREET PIPE BRIDGE	CATRINE	C&DVDC	Included in 2 above
4	BANK AVENUE F/B	CUMNOCK	C&DVDC	£8,000
5	GLAISNOCK STREET NORTH F/B	CUMNOCK	C&DVDC	£1,000
6	GLAISNOCK STREET SOUTH F/B	CUMNOCK	C&DVDC	£1,000
7	F/B – 18 HIGH STREET	DALMELLINGTON	C&DVDC	£5,000
8	F/B – 52 HIGH STREET	DALMELLINGTON	C&DVDC	£5,000
9	MILLMANOCH AVENUE F/B	DRONGAN	SRC Education	£2,000
10	CARSTON AVENUE F/B	DRONGAN	C&DVDC	£25,000
11	BONNYTON AVENUE F/B	DRONGAN	C&DVDC	£4,000
12	CEMETERY ROAD F/B	GALSTON	K&LDC	£50,000
13	PORTLAND BRAE F/B	HURLFORD	K&LDC	£15,000
14	OLD HOWFORD ROAD F/B	MAUHLINE	C&DVDC	£20,000
15	OLD LUGAR BRIDGE	OCHILTREE	C&DVDC	£100,000
16	BRINGAN FORD F/B	West Wardlaw	K&LDC	£10,000
			TOTAL	£278,000