

Beecraigs Country Park opens to public after January storm

Beecraigs Country Park has been opened to the public for the first time since the January storm.

A meeting of Linlithgow Local Area Committee this month heard that the main pathway through the country park had been cleared.

But visitors are urged to stick to the paths as large areas of woodland still have damaged or broken trees following the 24 January storm, and another mini storm less than a month later.

West Lothian's NETs Land and countryside teams received hundreds of calls after more than 2,000 trees came down across the county during Storm Eowyn.

Andy Johnston, a manager with the countryside teams told the committee: "We are still recovering from the storm. The main areas of the park are all now open, the main footpaths are now open, however one or two of the smaller paths are still closed due to fallen trees and we're working our way through that.

"The woodland areas in general if you come off the footpaths still have a number of hanging trees as well so whilst they are open, we advise that people enter the woodland areas with a degree of caution.

"The amount of trees that have come down has meant that we have had to go back and look at our long-term management plans for Beecraigs There's been a significant number of trees brought down. The other area still affected is the field

Archery area, and we would hope to clear that in the next week.”

Chairing the meeting, councillor Sally Pattle, Lib Dem, said: “I want to take the opportunity to publicly extend thanks for everything that you and your department did during and after Eowyn.

“The information that your department provided us and the public through the storm then in aftermath and also the power of work that operatives did to be out there and get the roads cleared, check the cemeteries.

“Beecraigs is now open. There’s been a huge amount of work. There’s obviously been a huge amount of damage up there but it’s great to see it open again. I just wanted to publicly say thank you.”

The thanks were echoed by Labour’s Tom Conn.

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter