
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	1 December 2016
Report By:	Head of Legal & Property Services	Report No:	GM/LP/154/16
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712710
Subject:	Local Government Elections 2017: Review of Polling Scheme		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report proposes a draft Polling Scheme for purposes of the local government elections in May 2017 to take account of the decision of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (LGBCS) to review Inverclyde Council ward boundaries as from that election.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council at its meeting on 29 September 2016 considered the decision of the LGBCS to increase Councillor numbers from 20 to 22 and to form a new seventh ward (six 3-Member wards and one 4 Member ward).
- 2.2 The new ward alignment means that an interim Polling Scheme be proposed to take account of the new ward and its consequent effect on polling districts. Additionally, it is the Council's objective to release pressure on the School Estate and to seek substitute venues instead of primary schools for future elections. Furthermore, the Schools Estate Management Plan is being implemented and there are necessary alterations to the Polling Scheme by reason of the unavailability of formerly long-established polling places.
- 2.3 This report proposes an interim Polling Scheme to take account of the new ward, new polling districts, the Council's policy and the progress of the SEMP. It is proposed that an informal public consultation exercise be undertaken for this interim review and that the finalised scheme be the subject of a campaign for local public awareness.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- 3.1 The Council considers the terms of this report and approves the draft Polling Scheme attached for purposes of an interim review;
- 3.2 That it be remitted to the Head of Legal & Property Services to conduct a community consultation and to report thereon to a special meeting of the Council in January 2017; and
- 3.3 Meantime, that in the interests of preparing for the May 2017 local government elections it be remitted to the Head of Legal & Property Services to secure viable options for the Polling Scheme as considered appropriate.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The LGBCS proposal which has been approved by Scottish Ministers as at 14 September 2016 provides for 22 Councillors within Inverclyde with one 4-Member ward and six 3-Member wards thus increasing the number of wards in Inverclyde by one and increasing Councillor numbers by two.
- 4.2 The electoral wards for Inverclyde are as follows:

Ward No	Ward Name	Councillors	Electorate Sept 13	Actual Variation from Parity	Forecast Electorate	Forecast Variation from Parity
1	Inverclyde East	3	8,515	-2%	8,260	2%
2	Inverclyde East Central	3	8,084	-3%	7,841	-3%
3	Inverclyde Central	3	8,271	-1%	8,023	-1%
4	Inverclyde North	4	10,854	-3%	10,528	-3%
5	Inverclyde West	3	8,655	4%	8,395	4%
6	Inverclyde South West	3	8,832	6%	8,567	6%
7	Inverclyde South	3	8,030	-4%	7,789	-4%
	Totals	22	61,241	3%	59,403	3%

- 4.3 Plans illustrating the ward boundary changes are attached as Appendix 1 and will be on display at the Council meeting.
- 4.4 This Council always reviews its Polling Scheme arrangements after each election or referendum. The LGBCS decision of September 2016 has necessitated a full-scale review of the Polling Scheme. Additionally, it is the Council's preference to release pressure on the School Estate and to seek substitute venues for primary schools as far as is possible. Furthermore, the implementation of the Schools Estate Management Plan has resulted in the necessary substitution of formerly long-standing primary schools as polling stations.
- 4.5 The previous statutory review of polling places was approved by the Council at its meeting on 10 April 2014 and in this way the Council has complied with its schedule of compulsory reviews. Subsequent compulsory reviews must be started and completed within every fifth year from October 2013. In view of the timescales from the LGBCS decision in September 2016 it is only possible for this Council to carry out an interim review at this juncture (and the compulsory review will be undertaken for completion by October 2018). The interim review can be undertaken with a period of public consultation during December 2016 with a report back on responses in January 2017 thus allowing for progress of all electoral arrangements to secure polling places by May 2017.

5.0 POLLING SCHEME

- 5.1 In order to deal with the creation of a new ward within the central area of Inverclyde, there are many significant changes to ward boundaries and polling districts which have, in turn, necessitated a major revision of the Council's Polling Scheme.
- 5.2 There are delegated powers remitted to the Chief Executive to take account of any necessary changes in the interim Polling Schemes in order to facilitate proper electoral arrangements (closure of buildings, alternative venues for polling places and so on). Additionally, this Council reviews its Polling Scheme after each election or referendum in order to ensure that it is kept up-to-date.
- 5.3 Appendix 2 forms the proposed new polling scheme and it comprises the following details: current ward number; new ward number; current polling district; new polling district; current polling place; new polling place, current number of polling stations; new number of polling stations, indicative electorate for that polling district.

- 5.4 The new ward boundaries have necessitated many changes to polling district boundaries. A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of an electoral ward. In Scotland, as far as is practicable, each electoral ward must be divided into two or more polling districts (unless there are special circumstances). A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected. A polling place within a polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across that polling district. (A polling station is the room or area within the polling place, itself, where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the Council, polling stations are chosen by the Returning Officer for the election). Appendix 2 provides Members with details of how the new ward boundaries affect the polling districts and specifies polling places within each electoral ward.
- 5.5 It is proposed that the attached Polling Scheme (Appendix 2) be considered as an interim review (given the timescales available from the LGBCS September 2016 decision). A full review will be undertaken prior to October 2018.
- 5.6 In the meantime, the changes are as described in Appendix 2. The changes have necessitated the full-scale re-numbering of all Polling Districts. Some key changes are highlighted as follows:
- (a) New Venue – St Mary's Episcopal Church, Bardrainney Avenue, Port Glasgow – to release pressure on School Estate (substituting for St Francis' Primary School).
 - (b) New Venue – St Francis' Church, Auchenbothie Road, Port Glasgow – to take account of voters who previously voted in Ward 1 (IG05) but who now are in Ward 2 (IG05);
 - (c) New venue – Upper Port Glasgow Social Club, Crosshill Road, Port Glasgow – to replace the long-standing polling station at Boglestone Community Centre – this is necessitated by the re-definition of this polling place from Ward 1 to Ward 2 thus requiring this significant change.
 - (d) The McLean Museum and Art Gallery, Watt Hall will not be available for use as a polling place by virtue of necessary repairs and St John's Episcopal Church, Union Street, Greenock will be the substitute polling place.
 - (e) A new polling place will be established at the Mount Kirk, 95 Dempster Street, Greenock for voters in new Ward 7.
 - (f) Lady Alice Primary School, Inverkip Road, Greenock will not be available as a polling place and a substitute location is the Southwest Library, Barr's Cottage, Greenock.
 - (g) Moorfoot Primary School, Moorfoot Drive, Greenock is unavailable for use as a polling place and will be substituted by Gourock Golf Club, Cowal View, Gourock.
 - (h) New venue – Inverkip Community Centre in place of Inverkip Primary School.
 - (i) As a result of the LGBCS changes to the Ward Boundaries, voters in Polling District IG05 (Ward 1) as indicated above in point (b) have been split between new Ward 1 (IG04) – St Mary's Episcopal Church and new Ward 2 (IG05) – St Francis' Church. Similarly, voters in Polling District IG18 (Ward 3) who used to vote at the Salvation Army Centre have been split between new Ward 3 (IG15) which is Prospecthill Christian Fellowship Church and new Ward 4 (IG17) which remains at the Salvation Army Centre.
- 5.7 There are many consequent changes for the electorate in respect of their polling places and a full scheme of public advertisement and awareness will be undertaken with the assistance of Corporate Communications to ensure voter awareness. All of the changes, the maps and the draft Polling Scheme have been intimated to Members on 23 September and 9 November 2016.
- 5.8 As this is proposed as an interim review, given the necessary timescales, public comment will be sought from the Community Councils and from Elected Members, the MP, MSPs and MEP. The draft Polling Scheme will also be displayed at the Customer Service Centre and at the public libraries within Inverclyde. The consultation response date for the interim review will be 6 January 2017 and the outcome of this consultation process will be reported to a special meeting of the Council to be held in January 2017.
- 5.9 In the meantime, given the timescales for preparation, the Head of Legal & Property Services will make such arrangements as are necessary to secure options for the proposed electoral arrangements.

- 5.10 In view of the timescales, the Electoral Registration Officer (the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board Assessor) had intended to compile the Electoral Register and publish this by 1 December 2016. However, in view of significant changes affecting the Council and East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire Councils, the ERO is now intending to complete the Electoral Register by February 2017. In the interim, the Council has been in close contact with the ERO and has given him in early November the draft Polling Scheme for his assistance in compiling the register.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 None.

Financial Implications:

The Scottish Government funds the electronic counting infrastructure but the Council is financially responsible for all other costs of holding the Local Government elections and provision of £120,000 is sought.

One Off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
To be determined	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Possible accommodation alterations and infrastructure
Local Government Elections	Elections	2017/18	£120,000	n/a	From Earmarked Reserves

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Services to Members	Remuneration	2017	£41,000	n/a	Increase in remuneration because of two additional Councillors.
	Travelling expenses/ training etc.		£3,000		Provides for a 10% increase in overhead budgets

Legal

- 6.2 The draft Polling Scheme will be the subject of an interim review to take account of necessary timescales for the electoral arrangements to be implemented for May 2017 local government elections.

Human Resources

- 6.3 None.

Equalities

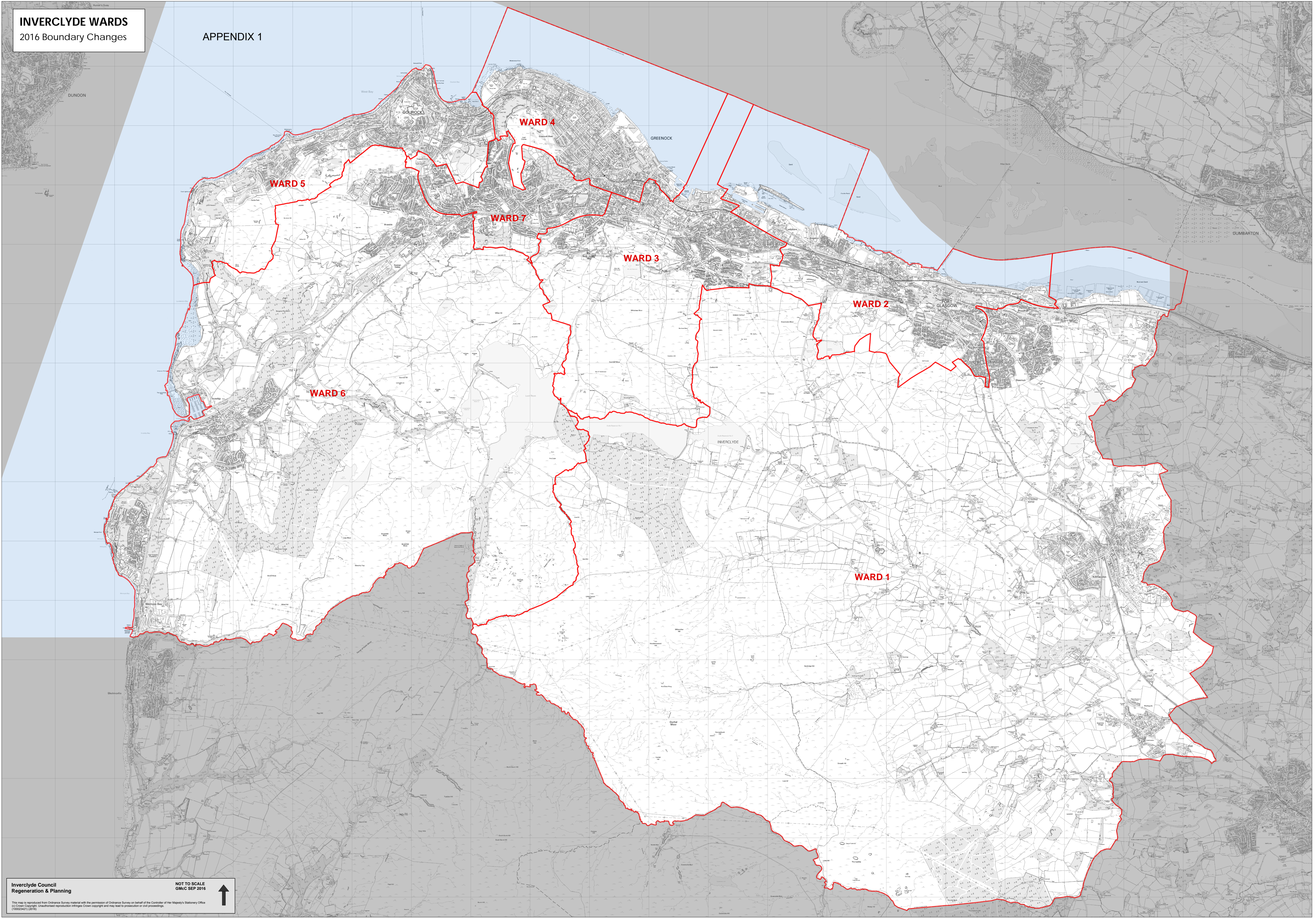
- 6.4 None.

Repopulation

- 6.5 The revised boundaries and Councillor numbers takes account of proposed forecasts for electorate numbers within Inverclyde and, accordingly, seek to address and sustain local democracy within this area.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.



APPENDIX 2**POLLING SCHEME
CURRENT AND PROPOSED
NOVEMBER 2016**

Current Ward No	New Ward No	Current Polling District Reference	New Polling District Reference	Current Polling Place	New Polling Place	Current No of Polling Stations	New No of Polling Stations	New Polling District Indicative Electorate
1	1	IG02	IG01	Holy Family Church Hall, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow	Holy Family Church Hall, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow	1	1	1095
1	1	IG03	IG02	Struthers Memorial Church, Arran Avenue, Port Glasgow	Struthers Memorial Church, Arran Avenue, Port Glasgow	1	1	1090
1	1	IG04	IG03	Park Farm Community Hall, Oronsay Avenue, Port Glasgow	Park Farm Community Hall, Oronsay Avenue, Port Glasgow	1	1	514
1	1	IG05	IG04	St Francis' Primary School, East Barmoss Avenue, Port Glasgow	St Mary's Episcopal Church, Bardrainey Avenue, Port Glasgow	3	2	1424
1	2	IG05	IG05	St Francis' Primary School, East Barmoss Avenue, Port Glasgow	St Francis Church, Auchenbothie Road, Port Glasgow	3	1	1063
1	2	IG06	IG06	Clune Park Resource Centre, Montgomerie Street, Port Glasgow	Clune Park Resource Centre, Montgomerie Street, Port Glasgow	1	1	622
1	2	IG07	IG07	Boglestone Community Centre, Dubbs Place, Port Glasgow	Upper Port Glasgow Social Club, Crosshill Road, Port Glasgow	3	3	2348
2	2	IG08	IG08	Port Glasgow Lesser Town Hall, Shore Street, Port Glasgow	Port Glasgow Lesser Town Hall, Shore Street, Port Glasgow	2	2	1150
2	2	IG09	IG09	Port Glasgow Bowling Club, Birkmyre Avenue, Port Glasgow	Port Glasgow Bowling Club, Birkmyre Avenue, Port Glasgow	2	2	1233
2	2	IG11	IG10	Gibshill Community Centre, 2 Smillie Street, Greenock	Gibshill Community Centre, 2 Smillie Street, Greenock	1	2	1136

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2	3	IG12	IG11	Auchmountain Halls, Burnhead Street, Greenock	Auchmountain Halls, Burnhead Street, Greenock	2	2	2265
2	3	IG13	IG12	Craigend Resource Centre, McLeod Street, Greenock	Craigend Resource Centre, McLeod Street, Greenock	2	1	990
2	3	IG14	IG13	Crawfurdsburn Community Centre, Carwood Street, Greenock	Crawfurdsburn Community Centre, Carwood Street, Greenock	2	2	1757
2	3	IG16 & IG10	IG14	Whinhill Primary School, Drumfrochar Road, Greenock	Whinhill Primary School, Drumfrochar Road, Greenock	1	1	1102
3	4	IG17	IG16	Wellpark/Mid Kirk Church Hall, Clyde Square, Greenock	Wellpark/Mid Kirk Church Hall, Clyde Square, Greenock	1	1	936
3	3	IG18	IG15	Salvation Army Centre, 59 Regent Street (enter from Roxburgh Street), Greenock	Prospecthill Christian Fellowship Church, 8 Prospecthill Street, Greenock	2	2	1353
3	4	IG18	IG17	Salvation Army Centre, 59 Regent Street (enter from Roxburgh Street), Greenock	Salvation Army Centre, 59 Regent Street (enter from Roxburgh Street), Greenock	2	2	1307
3	4	IG19	IG18	McLean Museum & Art Gallery, Watt Hall, (enter from Kelly Street), Greenock	St John's Episcopal Church, Union Street, Greenock	3	3	2745
3	4	IG20	IG19	Ardgowan Club, Ardgowan Square, Greenock	Ardgowan Club, Ardgowan Square, Greenock	2	2	1436
3	4	IG21	IG20	Finnart Scout Hall, 159 Finnart Street, Greenock	Finnart Scout Hall, 159 Finnart Street, Greenock	2	2	2252

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3	4	IG22	IG21	Lyle Kirk Hall, Bentinck Street, Greenock	Lyle Kirk Hall, Bentinck Street, Greenock	2	2	1537
4	7	IG23	IG33	Prospecthill Christian Fellowship Church, 8 Prospecthill Street, Greenock	Mount Kirk, 95 Dempster Street, Greenock	1	1	1026
4	7	IG24	IG34	Lady Alice Primary School, Inverkip Road, Greenock	South West Library, Barr's Cottage, Greeock	3	3	2816
4	7	IG25	IG35	Grieve Road Community Centre, Grieve Road, Greenock	Grieve Road Community Centre, Grieve Road, Greenock	1	1	809
4	7	IG26	IG36	St Joseph's Primary School, Wren Road, Greenock	St Joseph's Primary School, Wren Road, Greenock	2	2	1744
4	7	IG27	IG37	St Andrew's Primary School, Chester Road, Greenock	St Andrew's Primary School, Chester Road, Greenock	2	2	1316
5	5	IG28	IG22	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club, Cove Road, Gourock	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club, Cove Road, Gourock	2	2	1757
5	5	IG29	IG23	Gamble Halls, 44 Shore Street (enter from Davidson Drive), Gourock	Gamble Halls, 44 Shore Street (enter from Davidson Drive), Gourock	2	2	1774
5	5	IG30	IG24	Kirn Drive Community Centre, Kirn Drive, Gourock	Kirn Drive Community Centre, Kirn Drive, Gourock	2	2	2079
5	5	IG31	IG25	Moorfoot Primary School, Moorfoot Drive, Gourock	Gourock Golf Club, Cowal View, Gourock	1	1	811

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5	5	IG32	IG26	Spinnaker Hotel, Albert Road, Gourrock	Spinnaker Hotel, Albert Road, Gourrock	1	1	824
5	5	IG33	IG27	Royal Gourrock Yacht Club, Ashton Road, Gourrock	Royal Gourrock Yacht Club, Ashton Road, Gourrock	2	2	1151
6	6	IG34	IG28	Upper Larkfield Community Hall, Lothian Road, Greenock	Upper Larkfield Community Hall, Lothian Road, Greenock	2	2	1755
6	6	IG35	IG29	Aileymill Nursery School, Norfolk Road, Greenock	Aileymill Nursery School, Norfolk Road, Greenock	2	2	1624
6	6	IG36	IG30	Branchton Community Centre, Branchton Road, Greenock	Branchton Community Centre, Branchton Road, Greenock	1	1	648
6	6	IG37	IG31	Inverkip Primary School, Station Road, Inverkip	Inverkip Community Centre, Main Street, Inverkip	3	3	2519
6	6	IG38	IG32	Wemyss Bay Community Centre, Ardgowan Road, Wemyss Bay	Wemyss Bay Community Centre, Ardgowan Road, Wemyss Bay	2	2	2010
1	1	IN01	IN01	Carsemeadow, Craigbet Road, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir	Carsemeadow, Craigbet Road, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir	1	1	623
1	1	IN02	IN02	St Columba Church Hall, Bridge of Weir Road, Kilmacolm	St Columba Church Hall, Bridge of Weir Road, Kilmacolm	3	3	3605