



Clydebelt News

Number fourteen

November 2001

Clydebelt is the organisation dedicated to protecting our Greenbelt heritage in the Kilpatrick Hills and is concerned with other "undeveloped" areas nearby
It is non-political, non-sectarian, and non-profit-making

Accent on hills access becomes acute

Countryside access is still not settled. Scottish government legislation hasn't properly emerged, and may suit none of the interested groups who had reached a fair level of agreement. In the meantime, West Dunbartonshire Council has produced its own Access Strategy. It has been prepared by Land Use Consultants.

Several Clydebelt members had been at a Council workshop last year - we sympathised with farmers worries about vandalism and carelessness, but we felt there was too much emphasis on creating paths.

We were not included in further consultations. We received the full final document just in time for the committee to comment by the early November deadline. Surprisingly Clydebelt was omitted from the lists of groups who have already expressed an interest in access, and was not included in the Strategy as potential partners in an Access Forum, although the Strategy includes building on "grass roots action ... as a positive step towards stimulating community environmental ownership".

The Strategy recommends West Dunbartonshire Council employ a full-time Access Officer to help implement the Access Strategy. And perhaps the Access Alliance will continue to meet to discuss this and related issues.

The Strategy proposes Action Areas, including

- Clydebelt to Bowling -
see back page about Clydebelt concern on access to the Clyde waterfront
- Dumbarton & the Foreshore
- the Kilpatricks.

For the Kilpatrick Hills the strategy says "In the past, conflicts have arisen between land managers and irresponsible users of paths in the area. Development and improvement of further upland routes could help to reduce this conflict by clarifying where people are being encouraged to walk, cycle or ride" The priority is for "the Kilpatricks Project ... to promote reasonable access ... working closely with local farmers to ensure that access provision has their support".

Access affect Clydebelt members greatly, and will be the main issue at the meeting on Tuesday 27th November

Duntocher Burn Walkway

The Kilpatricks Project - to be renamed "West Dunbartonshire Greenspace Project" - was funded to make detailed proposals for a walkway along the Duntocher Burn, and to work on phase one.

Other concerns

Since the last Newsletter, several other issues have occupied the Committee:

- ◇ foot & mouth disease
- ◇ Proliferation of mobile phone masts
- ◇ housing developments at Rodger's piggery
- ◇ golf range and GOALS on Gt Western Road
- ◇ proposals to tarmac access road into hills

The Saltings

A member emailed us with:

A new sewage plant is being built at the western end of the Saltings. A large volume of materials have needed to be taken down to facilitate the building of this facility. This has had the effect of turning the place into a quagmire through the continual traffic of heavy lorries.

Will the constructors put good the damage to the trees & surrounding environment and return it to it's original condition for the locals who use the place every day?

Future plans

Strategic planning

The Scottish Executive is reviewing the arrangements for Strategic Planning - the consultation period ran to 31 October 2001. The consultation document made several points with which Clydebelt members probably agree:

Many structure and local plans do not provide a sound basis for guiding investment in development or a sufficiently robust framework for the conservation of important natural and cultural heritage resources.

Strategic development plans should concentrate on employment, housing and transport. Environmental factors, in particular conservation of the built and natural heritage, landscape considerations, water quality and flood protection are key inputs in identifying land for development and priorities for regeneration if development is to be sustainable. Not only are these factors key inputs they are also key outputs of the process, for example in the form of green belts, and the plans must provide a robust and enduring basis for the conservation of built and natural heritage resources. Too often policies on housing, employment and transport run in parallel while the distinctive character and potential of places is not given sufficient attention.

We propose that a public examination of strategic development plans be made a requirement where there are objections which are not withdrawn. To make the process less formal and intimidating, we also propose that inquiries take the form of an exchange of views moderated by a Reporter as distinct from adversarial exchanges between competing parties and interests.

The Executive proposes, in the 4 city regions, 2 tiers of development plan, a strategic development plan and a local development plan. The rest of Scotland will be covered by a single plan.

The Executive hopes to announce its conclusions on the exercise in Spring 2002.

Clydebank Local Plan

The final version of the Clydebank Local Plan has been seen by councillors, but won't be out for public consultation until December or January.

The waterfront

Plans have been revealed for the Clyde Waterfront between the Clyde and Dumbarton Rd. from Clydebank to Erskine Ferry Road. Clydebelt is concerned that there would not be access to walk all along the shore.

This Newsletter has been distributed to organisations, libraries, councillors, and to the last known address of a member (if they have moved on, but you are interested, you are very welcome to join us).

You are invited to the Clydebelt

Annual General Meeting

7.30 pm Tuesday
27th November 2001

**in the Trinity Church,
Roman Road, Duntocher**

We will have more details of issues raised in this Newsletter, and any more that arise. The meeting is for all who are members, and you can join at the meeting. Come and make your feelings known.

Agenda

1. Minutes of previous meeting
2. Financial Report
3. News & current issues
4. Election of Committee
5. Any other competent business

followed by:

the Access Debate -

how should local and Scottish policy regulate access to the Kilpatrick Hills, Greenbelt and other local areas?

What does Clydebelt do?

- makes people aware of threats to their heritage
- holds public meetings, members meetings & special events
- produces leaflets, newsletters and web pages
- questions local authority planning departments
- counteracts developers' expensive publicity
- objects to undesirable planning applications
- gives evidence and cross-questions witnesses at public inquiries
- lobbies Councillors, MSPs and MPs
- tries to get access obstructions removed
- raises funds to pay costs
- works with other interested organisations
- helps local communities express objections effectively
- supports alternative plans for managing the hills
- influences planning and environmental policies

Join Clydebelt

at the meeting or send your name and address to:

Clydebelt, c/o 66 Oakfield Avenue, Glasgow G12 8LS

or email assist@clydebelt.org.uk

Membership is for a once-only fee of £1 (or £2 for a household) which should last for years of printing and postage unless we need another big campaign.