



Report for Helensburgh and Lomond Planning Group April 2022

Visions for Helensburgh

The HCC was delighted by the turn out and engagement at our public consultation event held on the 12th/13th March. It presented a view of the future development of the town and highlighted a cross-section of the volunteer groups working towards this. More than a thousand local residents, spanning the age groups, attended and there was a buzz of positive feedback and healthy debate. It is the intention that the results of this consultation will go on to form a basis for a Local Plan. The whole event was a huge success and everyone who participated is to be congratulated. It demonstrated the best of Helensburgh with the local community coming together to solve problems and move forward after what has been a very difficult two years.

It was very clear from discussions and responses that the Waterfront Development is a huge issue on which the community wants further information and consultation. To this end the Community Council unanimously agreed at the March meeting to write to Argyll and Bute Council seeking an urgent meeting to discuss a way forward. In the meantime we propose that the area should be considered as stalled space until a cohesive, coordinated agreement can be made between Argyll and Bute and the Helensburgh Community following wide ranging consultation.

Golf Club Housing Development

The Community Council Planning Group, consultation with the whole council, is currently working on our response to the planning application for 300 plus houses. We are working through the large amount of paperwork and intend to respond on four main issues.

Transport and Connectivity, Sustainability and the Environment, Local Infrastructure and Architecture and Design. There have been a number of local objections lodged, the majority relate to traffic difficulties, lack of infrastructure and environmental issues.

Litter Bin Survey

We are continuing to work with Plastic Free Helensburgh on a litter bin survey to present to the Council. The provision of suitable bins, sited in the appropriate places with enough capacity for busy times is the obvious solution. We hope our hard work over the last two years will lead to positive discussions with Argyll and Bute and a permanent resolution to this matter.

Beach Cleans and Colquhoun Shrub Bed Tidying

The Helensburgh Community Council and residents continue to demonstrate their commitment to the local environment by actively participating in clean ups and tidying projects. More than 30 participants took part in our recent Beach Clean which removed 80

bags of rubbish and a double sized skip full of contaminated seaweed, plus a trailer of driftwood from the Pier head litter sink following the winter storms.

A further group of 10 tidied the Shrub beds and litter picked Colquhoun Square to prepare it for the summer. Special thanks to the disbanded Friends of Hermitage who have now joined in this initiative.

Education Consultation Empowering Educators

The Community Council engaged fully with the community and attended a number of briefings to inform ourselves further. It was our conclusion that the proposals were not fully thought through and would do little or nothing to improve the education of Helensburgh pupils. We found no support for them in the community and that the proposals were badly timed coming after all the disruptions of the pandemic. We therefore asked that they be withdrawn. Our response is on our website.

Webinars

The HCC series of webinars planned on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in February and March were well attended and thought provoking and even got a mention in the Scottish Parliament. . These are the precursor to the opening of the John Logie Baird Innovation Hub being promoted by the Helensburgh Community Council

Hermitage Park

The HCC noted the disbanding of the Friends of Hermitage Park and thanked them for their hard work over the last ten years. We are particularly concerned that the Lottery Money allocated for project gets spent on the areas which were in the original bid eg the Memorial Garden at the war Memorial.

Town Infrastructure Issues

We continue to engage with the council on issues regarding infrastructure maintenance in particular with roads and street lighting. These can be sources of frustration not only for us but for local residents. We will continue to look for solutions and work with the council , but hope that issues which have now been going on for far to long which include repairs to street lamps, provision of legible street signs, markings on the roads and potholes will come to a swift conclusion now normality is returning. We engaged with the community and tried to keep them informed during the recent refuse collection problems. This did inevitably cause a great deal of frustration and lead to an increase in litter around the town. We encourage residents to report problems on the website so that they can be logged. , but they are often frustrated, as are we by the lack of follow up and resolution to these issues.

Plastic Free Helensburgh

We are pleased to announce that following excellent C'community engagement and hard work by local businesses, community groups, the community council and the PFH steering Group of volunteers, Helensburgh is now one of only nine Plastic Free Communities in Scotland. The work continues as we look to improve our water quality, marine environment and reduce the amount of packaging used by businesses and groups, in light of the upcoming single use plastic ban. This award demonstrates the community's very real concern for the environment and a willingness to do something about it.

Sarah Davies Helensburgh Community Council

