

CHAIR PERSON'S REPORT AGM 2 JUNE 2015

- Over the past 12 months the Moss has continued to be well used, and has received invaluable support from Fiona Burns from the Mugdock Rangers and her army of volunteers, and from Jackie Gillespie, our EDC Streetscene Project Officer.

We've had invaluable conservation work from the volunteers on the paths, the boardwalk and the birch scrub; we've had various recreational activities on the Moss; and we've had continuing interest from our local primary schools in exploring the Moss for fun and finding out about nature. Fiona has been most closely involved in these particular activities so I'm going to leave her to talk about these in a bit more detail.

- On the topic of more strategic conservation work on the Moss over the last few months Jackie will be speaking about this as part of our guest speaker slot.
- For ourselves, in March of this year, Anna Illingworth and I again attended a volunteering roadshow at Lenzie Academy. The Academy encourages their pupils to take on some volunteering to add to their CVs and this year we had the pupils through S1 to S5. We had expressions of interest from just under 30 pupils and we are having a dedicated meeting with this group shortly, hopefully to translate their interest into action. Possible activities are making bat and bird boxes, planting native holly and hazel in the woodlands, removing un-native beech saplings, path and ditch work, litter picking.
- I also recently took round the Moss a party of 7 teachers from the Academy on their "Health and Wellbeing" day. We went round the circular path and had a very enjoyable walk. We stopped from time to time to talk about the history of the Moss, its geography, and its flora and fauna, and I think we have now gained some new fans. For most of them it was their first visit.
- Merlwood Nursery children have recently started a "forest kindergarten" every Wednesday morning, and they have been enjoying – to quote - the trees, stones, sticks and a plethora of bugs and slugs. The nursery teachers report that the children are improving their learning capacity and developing their problem-solving skills, as well as enjoying playing outdoors which adds to their health and well-being. Unfortunately, this is currently under threat already because of dog dirt in the play area with some very unhappy results, and the nursery is going to put up notices to encourage dog owners not to let their dogs defecate without picking up after them.
- On to the proposed Local Development Plan, and to bring you up to date with this so far as it affects Lenzie Moss. As you know, the consultation on this started back in 2011 and is now nearing its conclusion. There were 2 sites which could have directly impacted negatively on the Moss, namely the Rugby Club proposal and the Crosshill Rd./Boghead Rd. proposal. I should reiterate that the Friends are fully supportive of the sporting aims of the two organisations concerned, but our main duty is to protect the unique character of the Moss as an LNR when local building work could impact on it.

We have made representations to the Council throughout the whole consultation process and when the proposed final Plan was published earlier this year, we were pleased to see that the Council had declined to include these two sites for development. As part of the final consultation process we sent in to the Council our approval of their decision.

This is now the final stage in the LDP as far as the public is concerned. The period of consultation on the proposed final Plan ended on May 28 and the Council will now review all the responses

and try to resolve any outstanding appeals. Any unresolved appeals will be referred to the Scottish Government for determination. We understand that the Government reviews these appeals using only the representations made over the total period of consultation and it does not have a public hearing except in exceptional circumstances.

The government's decision on the appeals is final and the Plan will be approved some time in 2016. This will form the basis of development in East Dunbartonshire for the following 5 years.

Shortly thereafter, discussions will then commence for the next 5 year Plan!

We hope that the Moss is safe.

- You will also be aware of the proposal to rebuild Lenzie Moss Primary School on the site of the existing playing field. We have again attended all the Council consultations on this. The Planning Application was recently posted on line on the Councils' website. We are pleased to see that the Plan still includes pedestrian access on to the Moss through the new school which was an issue for residents in Myrtle Avenue and surrounding streets. In addition, the plan does not provide for vehicle access on to the Moss but as I speak there is some dubiety about this which we are attempting to clarify with the planning department. There are also 3 other issues that are outstanding as far as the Friends are concerned, namely a hydrology review; a review of any light pollution from the pitches and its potential effect on wildlife; and pathway improvement over the Moss for access to the school. We are having a meeting this month with the lead architects and Planners to see where things stand on these issues.
- During the last 12 months we have again issued our twice yearly Newsletters and we hope everyone enjoys these. Thank you to Anna and David of the Newsletter Team for their contributions and critical eye on grammar!
- We continue to update our website and encourage you to visit this – and “like” us on Facebook if you wish, so that you receive up to date information.
- We also welcome anyone who would like to join us on the committee. An extra pair of hands will always be put to good use.
- Finally, on behalf of the other committee members, I should like to thank Fiona and the Mugdock volunteers, and Jackie, for all their interest in the Moss and their hard work. It does make such a difference to us and keeps us motivated. I myself should also like to thank the other members of the committee for their continued support.

Christine Morrison
Chairperson