

What is special about Lenzie Moss?

We may know why we love Lenzie Moss, but what do other people think? At a recent meeting, local residents gave their opinion as to why the Moss matters. Whether it's for recreation, exercise, to enjoy the views of the Campsies, or to spot the native wildlife, it's evident that people feel very strongly that the Moss must be protected. Here's a sample of what people said...

"It's a beautiful wild green space in the heart of Lenzie"

"Our very own breathing space, free from urban intrusion"



Update on the Conservation Volunteers

Over the Autumn, the Conservation Volunteers have been out in force, completing essential work to keep the Moss in good health.

- Thirty-four brave individuals turned up one wet afternoon for the Harry Potter broom event and helped remove invasive birch trees.
- In October regular volunteers teamed up to work with Duke of Edinburgh scheme volunteers to remove birch scrub.
- 10th November was CSV Action Earth Day, and we were joined by Mugdock Conservation Volunteers and Duke of Edinburgh volunteers to remove garden plant species and beech and sycamore saplings from the Moss.
- In December we concentrated on boardwalk and path maintenance.

Looking to the future

In February we will hold a work day followed by a Fairtrade Tasting event at The Lounge café, together with the Lenzie Fairtrade group.

Get involved in the Volunteers' group

We are an informal group and we encourage anyone who can help to get involved. Although the Moss is now a Local Nature Reserve, that doesn't mean all its maintenance is carried out by the council. To help out, you don't need any previous experience, and you can participate for whatever period of time you can give. All tools are provided and the work is not too physical.

"Protecting Lenzie's greenbelt is essential... Once lost, it is gone forever"

"Lenzie Moss is a safe, traffic-free area for family walks and cycles"

"Its pathway is ... used by adults, children and dog walkers, as well as cyclists and wheelchair users"

"Locals and holidaymakers enjoy panoramic views of the Campsie Fells"

Over to you

Let us know why the Moss is important to you. Send us your photos, or stories about the Moss that highlight why it's a special place to you. We plan to use them for future newsletters.

Membership

Please support this important greenspace by becoming a Friend of Lenzie Moss, thus helping us carry on the work of protecting this area to the benefit of the local community. You can join (or renew your membership) by contacting our Membership Secretary. Why not tell your friends and neighbours about it too?

Annual Membership Fees are:

- Retired or Unwaged £7
- Single £7
- Family £12

Subscriptions cover the year April 1 until March 31 the following year. For this you will receive twice-yearly Newsletters and will be kept informed of events and activities concerning the Moss.

Committee Members

Chairperson: Paul Dudman.
E mail: Paul.dudman1@ntlworld.com

Vice Chair: Anna Illingworth tel: 0141 776 1560

Secretary: Kate Sanford
E mail: kate_sanford@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Christine Morrison
E mail: cmorrison@fsmail.net

Membership Secretary: Joan Christie tel: 0141 776 6859
E mail: Joancraigchristi@aol.com

Newsletter Anna Illingworth tel: 0141 776 1560

Committee Member: Iain Christie tel: 0141 776 6859

Website www.friendsoflenziemoss.org.uk

To place an article on our web page or Newsletter, please contact Anna Illingworth in the first instance, tel. 0141 776 1560.

friends of Lenzie Moss

Winter 2012

The Friends of Lenzie Moss is a voluntary association dedicated to conserving the Moss for the benefit of present and future generations by all possible means: through education, liaison with official bodies, and appropriate environmental management.

In this issue...

Facts about peat -

the Scottish Government has been paying attention to its value in the context of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

Bea Rae -

Bea spearheaded a campaign to protect the Moss from development in the late '80s. Many of you will remember her and will be pleased to see that the pathway across the Moss from the station to Laburnum Gardens has been named after her in memory of her contribution to conserving the Moss for future generations.

Proposed development - update.

Paul Dudman
Chairman





More than a bog

It may best be appreciated in a glass of malt, but there's more to peat than the murky water, and its smoky smell. It is critical to Scotland's capacity to reduce greenhouse gases, and achieve climate change targets.

Anyone who has walked in the Scottish countryside will have had a soaking at some point in a peat bog. Scotland has about 80% of the UK's peat deposits, which have evolved in damp, waterlogged conditions. Blanket bogs, like the Flow Country, are located in the Highlands, and cover almost a quarter of our territory. As Europe's largest intact expanse of blanket bog they are a precious natural resource. In the Lowlands, raised bogs, like Lenzie Moss, form over millennia, as sphagnum moss gradually decays to form peat, potentially reaching a depth of 11 metres.

Peat bogs have myriad properties. They are a haven for moorland breeding birds, and provide a habitat for unusual plants including some found on Lenzie Moss such as the Round Leaved Sundew. In some circumstances, a healthy peat bog will help store water and reduce flood risk. Much of Scotland's water supply comes from peaty landscapes.

Yet historically peat has not been well protected. Cutting ditches and turning the land over to agriculture or forestry have caused bogs to dry up and carbon to be released into the atmosphere as greenhouse gases, contributing to climate change. According to the RSPB, there are 1,620 million tonnes of carbon held in Scotland's peatlands, making protection a matter of urgency.

Thankfully, efforts are underway to restore peatlands to be effective eco-systems again, and Scotland has a target of restoring 600,000 hectares to good condition by 2015. Environmental organisations are on the case, and the Scottish Government recently committed £1.7 million over 2 years to peatland restoration. It is an expensive business - £12m a year for a decade to reach the target - but we cannot afford to fail.

Memorial to Beatrice Rae

It's been a long time coming, but at last, after protracted discussions and negotiations on various options, a memorial has been established at Lenzie Moss.

It takes the form of a path named in her memory, i.e. the right-of-way which runs from the rear of Laburnum Gardens to its junction with the path parallel to the railway. This serves the twin aims of preserving her memory appropriately, but at minimal cost to East Dunbartonshire Council. You will see small signs "Bea's Path" added to the three-way signpost at the railway end, and to the lamppost at the other end. (The lamppost is in poor condition, but due to be replaced soon).

At some point during the 90's "Bea" played a significant role in implementing the first hard-surfacing of this path. This was the first path ever to be surfaced at Lenzie Moss - at the time a great boon to local residents, providing a "dry" walking route to Lenzie station and shops.

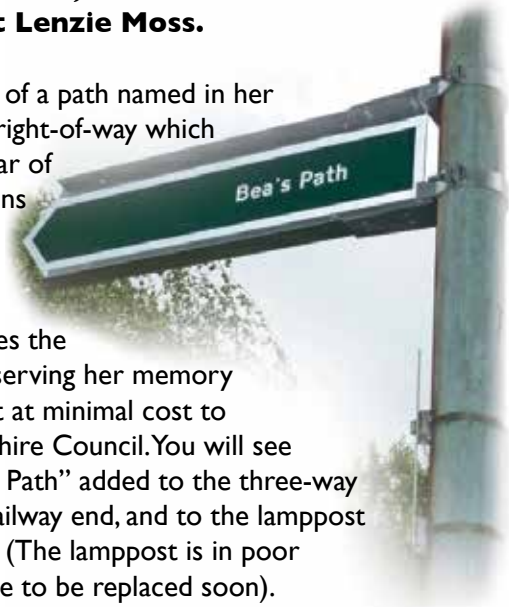
If it were not for Beatrice Rae, our Local Nature Reserve would not exist today. In 1989/90 she was the main protagonist at a Public Enquiry which eventually defeated a house-building proposal that would have ruined the Moss for ever. She put huge time and effort into organising a petition and summoning expert witnesses to report to the Enquiry. Thereafter she set up a new Friends of Lenzie Moss, and was our Secretary/ Treasurer and driving force until her sudden death in 1999. From then on we continued to pursue her ultimate aim of having Lenzie Moss protected as a Local Nature Reserve, for the benefit of present and future generations. This finally happened in 2009.

Thanks are due to East Dunbartonshire Council for putting this memorial in place.

Anna Illingworth

IT'S YOUR MOSS

Lenzie Moss is a Local Nature Reserve, and the Friends of Lenzie Moss play an important role in managing the future of the reserve. If you have any ideas for improvements we would love to hear from you at: friendsoflenziemoss@gmail.com



Update on the proposed development on Lenzie Moss

What has happened so far on the proposed development?

Following the AGM in June, we participated in meetings of the SaveLenzieMoss Action Group, a group of local residents who share our goal to protect the Moss from development.

In August, we attended an EDC Land Supply Workshop which identified the various sites under consideration for inclusion in the Local Development Plan (LDP) for housing. The Workshop indicated that the Rugby Club proposed to build houses on their existing pitches. This would entail relocating the clubhouse and new pitches on to the grassland adjacent to Lenzie Moss Primary School and the back of Juniper Gardens and Blackthorn Grove. The Rugby Club owns all this land but it is within the green belt. The grassland in particular is considered by many residents to be part of "Lenzie Moss".

In August we also circulated to you a leaflet giving an update on the Moss proposal with sample valid objections should you wish to write to the Council. We hope you all wrote in.

The Action Group undertook a similar leaflet drop around the streets closest to the Moss and also submitted 4 pages of formal objections on the proposed development to EDC Councillors.

What is the position now with the Council?

We thought there would be a decision about the Moss in September but there is now a delay until the New Year.

The reason is because of the Council's housing priority. In the next LDP its priority is the building of affordable homes. However, it has two major problems.

1. there is insufficient urban land on which to build the required number of homes
2. there is insufficient public money to build them

Developers will agree to build these homes but usually require the Council to allow them to build market price housing as well, the proportion being 3 market price homes for every 1 affordable. So, without intervention, the only option would be to allow developers to build more and more market price houses on more and more green belt land in the anticipation that they will include a proportion of affordable homes. The Lenzie Moss site falls into this category.

The quandary that the Council faces is that it has an obligation to protect the green belt, and it knows (per its own research) that there is no call for more market price housing, either now or in the foreseeable future.

Faced with this, the Council decided at the September Council meeting to go back to the Scottish Government to have its affordable housing target reviewed. It has not abandoned the developer option, but it has acknowledged that if it proceeds with development on green belt land there will be "significant press and community interest". Our letters and representations have hopefully been noted!

You can receive email updates by registering on www.savelenziemoss.org.uk or visiting our Facebook page. If you prefer a paper update, please contact a committee member.