



ACTION UPDATE

Issue No. 5: Growing Grounds Autumn 2010

Carts Greenspace

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Growing Grounds are good for people:

- * Gardeners get lots of healthy exercise;
- * People grow and eat their own fruit and veg, so have healthier diets;
- * Growers socialise with each other, boosting mental health;
- * They build communities of shared interest;
- * They enhance the landscape of an area

Grow in Glenburn get to grips with old kitchen garden at Glen Park

Grow in Glenburn is a voluntary group which was set up in September 2009 and which evolved from the Paisley Transition Town group.

Grow in Glenburn aims to promote better understanding of gardening and green issues in its local



Work teams from the Renfrewshire Green Gym have started clearing the site.

area. Its initial focus has been on a piece of under-used ground at Glen Park, within the Gleniffer Braes Country Park. This area was the old shrub nursery which has lain vacant for about a decade. Surrounded by a substantial hedge, this area used to be the kitchen garden for Glen House, which used to stand nearby.

Renfrewshire Council's Environmental Services are keen to support this community led initiative to return this ground to productive use in keeping with its original purpose.

Negotiations are underway between Grow in Glenburn and Renfrewshire Council about a



Former workers' accommodation could also be brought back into productive use.

lease or similar authorization for the initiative.

Meanwhile, work has started in partnership with BTCV Scotland's Renfrewshire Green Gym initiative to clear rampant scrub from the site, in the hope of starting cultivation and planting operations in about half of the site in 2010's growing season. *Contact: brycesandy@hotmail.com*

Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum

Following a successful study tour in August 2009, Carts Greenspace invited people to attend an exploratory meeting in December 2009. Since then the Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum has met bimonthly and has agreed

a mission of "increasing the quantity and quality of growing ground opportunities in Renfrewshire". 33 different organisations are now represented on the contacts list and these include existing growers, aspiring groups of grow-

ers, support agencies and council departments.



Ferguslie Park Community Gardening Scheme

The Ferguslie Park Community Gardening Scheme is a locally led initiative which is seeking to stimulate an interest in improving open spaces across this part of Paisley. The project is one of a number of responses to the Ferguslie Park Green Network Strategic Plan study commissioned in 2007.

Initially the group is concentrating on a vacant, former housing area off Baro-



Some of the enthusiastic volunteers who planted 800 hedgerow trees in an hour

chan Crescent.

The group has agreed its constitution, negotiated a lease with the Ferguslie Park Housing Association, worked up designs with the assistance of Carts Greenspace and completed a thorough clean-up across the site. In December the group decided to participate in the "Tree O'clock" world record tree planting attempt which was coordinated by BBC's Breathing

Places. It was hoped that this event would focus local and wider attention on the project as well as establishing a solid boundary hedge around the planned garden area. 800 Hawthorn, Guelder Rose and Hazel saplings were planted by 25 volunteers within the allotted hour.

Now attention has shifted to fund raising. With Carts Greenspace estimating that the first phase of development will cost nearly £25,000, this could be a steep challenge.

Contact ianduke01@hotmail.com

Go Greener promotes orchards in East Renfrewshire



Go Greener is a voluntary, not for profit organisation based in East Renfrewshire that is working hard to raise awareness

of the impact of climate change and global warming.

It has become a champion of Scot-

land's own fruit trees and is working hard to create new orchards in its area.

In 2008 a mini-orchard was planted in a Barrhead park. Each September

We believe that there are just over 100 allotment plots in Renfrewshire...

for the past two years a well attended Apple Day has been held in the Pavilion Visitor Centre in Rouken Glen Park.

The next ambitious plan is to establish an orchard of traditional Scottish apple varieties in Rouken Glen. More than 100 apple tree saplings have been obtained and are in a temporary nursery awaiting final planting in the selected site.

www.gogreener.org.uk

Brediland Allotments Association: growing and thriving

Brediland's site in Paisley is probably the oldest surviving growing ground in Renfrewshire, having been established in 1916. The site currently has 40 plots and there are a further 20 people on the waiting list.

There has been an upsurge in interest in recent years and a change in the profile of growers. 8 new tenants took over plots in 2009 and most of those were women. Family groups with helping children are the norm,

rather than solitary older men trying to escape from their families!

Unfortunately vandalism problems have also increased, with the site being particularly vulnerable to incursions from the adjacent National Cycle Network. Much effort and money has gone into reinforcing fencing, especially along this boundary. Renfrewshire Council's Paisley North Local Area Committee has been very supportive, providing a



Fine crop of onions from a plot at Brediland, drying in the sun before storage.

further £3,083 in 2010/11. The Council's Community Service Order teams assist with installation and other tasks.

eileenreid@ntl.com

Different approaches to finding new Growing Ground sites

One item discussed at the Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum's first meeting asked people what were the biggest problems facing them. Shortage of space for growing initiatives was the most frequently mentioned response and the hunt for new sites has been on the agenda ever since.

Some groups have developed an intimate knowledge of the open spaces - maintained and unkempt - in their neighbourhoods in their search for available growing grounds. The Paisley West & Cen-

tral Community Council perhaps faces the biggest challenge in this regard because its area is so densely urbanised and every scrap of ground seems to have some prior claim through the planning process.

A more systematic approach is now being attempted by making use of Renfrewshire Council's recently completed Open Space Audit. Planning Officer, Lynn Hollands,

gave an illustrated presentation to the Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum, showing how all of Renfrewshire's urban open space had now been categorised from

aerial photographs and how 355 separate sites had been evaluated to check their "fitness for purpose". All this computer wizardry still leaves a need for ground checking to confirm sites are suitable.



Even the most urban areas are a patchwork of grey and green but can we grow there?

Linking Growing Grounds with community led health agenda

A participatory community health event in Renfrewshire has stressed the need which exists for growing grounds - local people clearly recognise the potential health benefits.

A recent meeting between Carts Greenspace and the Renfrewshire Community Health Initiative has shown how agendas overlap between open space enhancement goals and health promotion.

Initially the discussion centred around the possible creation of a Healthy Eating "teaching garden" in the grounds of the Renfrewshire Community Health Initiative.

But then the discussion considered the issue of exactly who is going to do that teaching. Not only do we need people to teach traditional gardening skills but, increasingly, it is being recognised that people lack

skills in cooking unprocessed ingredients like vegetables. So the next step in the discussion is inevitably the creation of teaching kitchens next to the outdoor growing grounds...

... but unfortunately there are more than 200 people on allotment waiting lists!

Weavers Linn Project brings partners together

Renfrewshire Council Social Work has a successful track record of involving its client groups in productive and educational horticultural initiatives. Formerly, Urquhart House at Houston developed a project which grew into a mini market garden but this site was lost when facilities were modernised across the Council area.

A new opportunity has arisen



Unpromising soil conditions are found across much of the Weavers Linn site!

with the construction of the Weavers Linn Respite Centre in Glenburn.

As well as modern indoor facilities the development has included the creation of a fenced area

with a fully serviced teaching room and a sizeable metal storage container for tools, etc. Now the Department is getting together with user representatives from Weavers Linn, the Greensyde Centre, Flexicare and other outside partners to convert the space into a working growing ground. Designs by Carts Greenspace suggest development costs of £60,000 plus, so fund raising is priority number one!

Carts Greenspace

c/o Planning & Transport
Department
Renfrewshire Council,
Cotton Street,
Paisley PA1 1LL

Phone: 0141 842 5272
Fax: 0141 842 5040
E-mail:

steve.edwards@renfrewshire.gov.uk

placing greenspace at the heart of
regeneration

Find out more about us at
www.cartsgreenspace.org.uk



Carts Greenspace provides a free service to community groups and other organisations in East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire. We help people to create new greenspaces and to enhance existing open spaces in their neighbourhoods. We can help at various stages in a project:

- site selection and evaluation;
- design drawings and choice of materials;
- fund raising, including grant applications;
- securing relevant permissions;
- appointment and supervision of contractors (or other methods of completing the hard work on the ground).

Novel enquiries and new challenges are always welcome so, if you have a project requiring assistance, please contact us at the points shown on this page.

Modular flat pack gardens proposed for vacant land

In April 2010 the Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum heard an interesting presentation by Ally Corbett about the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network's "Sowing & Growing Everywhere" (SAGE) project. One of the consultant's recommendations was that vacant and derelict land sites be used to establish temporary growing grounds for periods of perhaps 3-5 years whilst awaiting redevelopment.

Flat pack raised beds would be constructed from recycled scaffolding planks and timber packing pallets, with the soil contained effectively in giant plastic

textile bags!



Proto-type perimeter raised planter with screen - under construction. The screen is fabricated of waste pallet wood and scaffolding boards.

The cube-shaped modular units can be assembled into attractive semi-enclosed garden landscapes and represent cost effective treatments



A pilot project has recently been launched at Lambhill in Glasgow but perhaps an opportunity exists to start looking for similar sites in some of the most intensively built-up sections of the Carts Greenspace area, like the centre and west end of Paisley.

alastair.corbett@gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk