
Friends of Glasgow West Newsletter

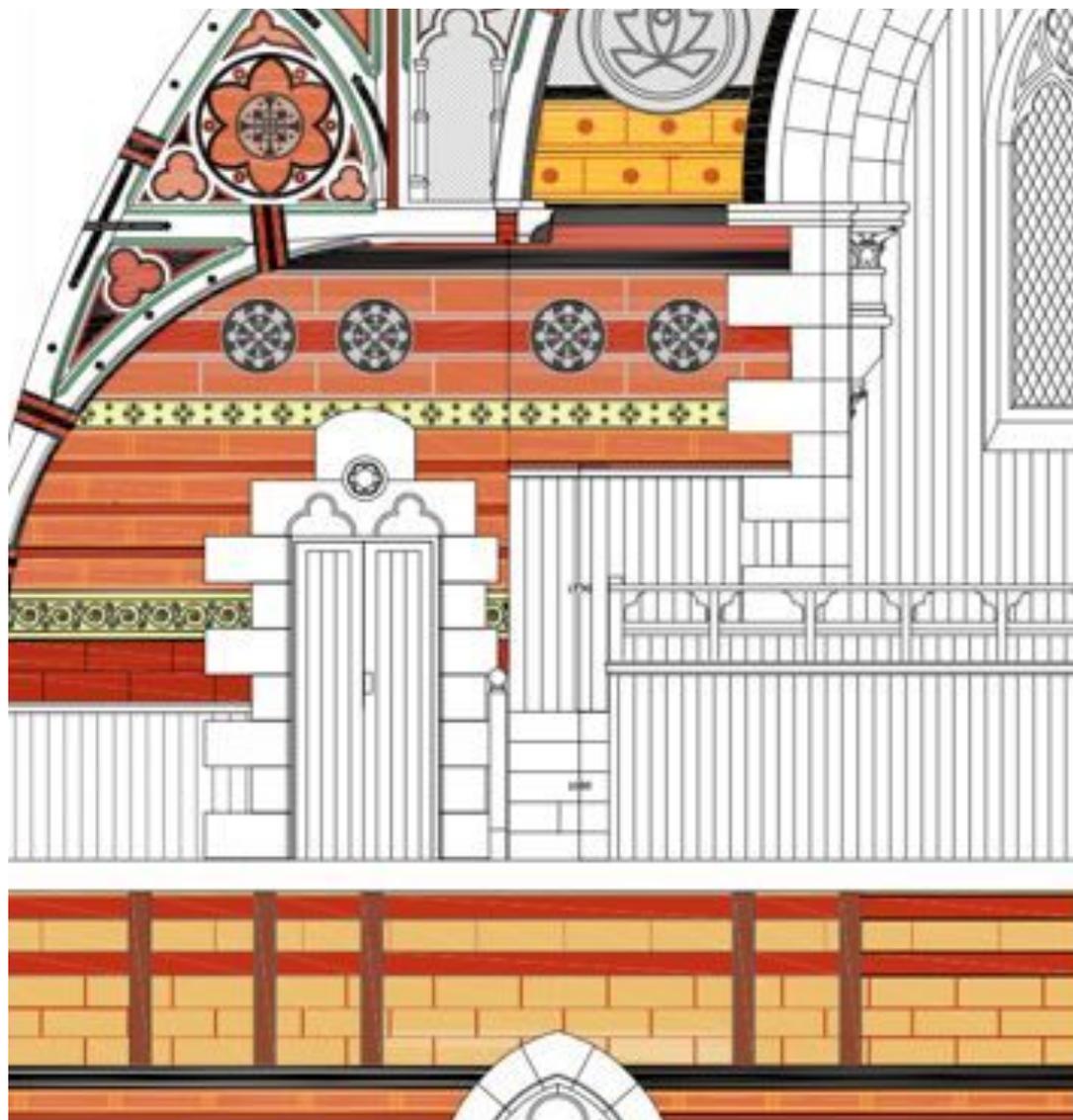
Issue 50

fgw.org.uk

September 2012

Preserving and enhancing the character and amenity of Glasgow's West End

FGW IS A LOCAL AMENITY SOCIETY WITH CHARITABLE STATUS SCO 24748



Graphic reconstruction of Daniel Cottier decoration to be reinstated in 2012 in the Cottier Theatre. Courtesy of Groves-Raines Studio and Four Acres Charitable Trust.

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Dates for your Diary...

FGW AGM

Tuesday 2 October 2012

FGW Awards Dinner

Thursday 22 November 2012

CONVENER'S COLUMN

First, some sad and unexpected news: Colin Cox, our Secretary of 5 years' standing, passed away in July. FGW Committee members attended his funeral along with others from several local organizations. Colin will be sorely missed, especially for his hosting of Glasgow University's West End Lectures (WEL). Colin's obituary is printed in full, opposite.

Very recently, we appointed a new WEL host, the well-known BBC Radio Scotland broadcaster Colin Mackay, who gave a West End Lecture himself in February. The programme of speakers and topics for Spring 2013 is currently in preparation.

June's West End Festival, with 23 Walks and 14 Talks, including "Govan Heritage Day" held in Lansdowne, attracted 1000 participants overall. We are currently considering how to step up promotion of these events in future.

OTAGO LANE

Ann Laird

PLANNING APPLICATION GRANTED

"Save Otago Lane" did everything humanly possible: well-organised, well-resourced, long-term, with broad-based solid community backing, it had strong cross-party political support. The FGW contribution was expertise on "built heritage" and "conservation appraisal".

In June, with permission recommended to be granted, local Cllr Martha Wardrop requested a site visit and hearing, which took place on 29 August: but the Planning Committee then granted permission for the 49 new residences in Otago Lane, comprising a few "mews" on the north side, and the remainder further down the lane, in two blocks of flats, close to the river.

We can only praise Martin Fell and Iain Steel highly for their sterling efforts to protect this quirky place, so well loved by so many Glaswegians.

FGW PUBLICATIONS

LISTED BUILDINGS in GLASGOW WEST

detailed information on over 300 listed buildings in and around the West End.

Includes Category (A, B or C(S)), Date of Construction, Description of Building, Architect(s), Date of Listing.

Information is presented in various ways – by street address, chronologically, and by type of building.

Updated in 2012 by Laura Barnett

Available at the AGM in October

FGW BIBLIOGRAPHY:

WEST END HISTORY & GLASGOW ARCHITECTURE

Complete update, with a new section - **Fiction set in the West End.**

Updated in 2012 by Helen Cameron

Available at the AGM in October

WEST END HERITAGE TRAILS

by Gordon Urquhart

Hyndland & Partickhill – Dowanhill Hillhead – Partick – Kelvinside

The Friends of Glasgow West, in our work to promote Glasgow West Conservation Area, have now reprinted all 5 Trails, funded by Glasgow City Heritage Trust.

Available FREE, at Hillhead Library, Partick Library and Mitchell Library

FGW COMMITTEE

Convener: Ann Laird

Vice Convener: David Howat

Treasurer: Iain Wotherspoon

Committee Members

Mary Donald, Helen Cameron, David Alcock, Laura Barnett (co-opted)

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Obituary: Colin Cox (1945 – 2012) Secretary, Friends of Glasgow West

Over the last five years, the West End community has become acquainted with Colin as a committed local activist and familiar figure, often seen talking to his good friend Marco Stevenson of Pizza Magic at the Little Hyndland shops.

Like many in 2007, Colin considered the proposed night-club in the former Botanic Gardens Station site to be extremely unsuitable. Moved to action, he joined the new “*Save our Botanics*” committee which successfully collaborated to achieve a far more “healthy” future for this famous green space.

Colin had a definite penchant for community activity, so Friends of Glasgow West asked him to join their committee, and he soon became Secretary. Invited by the Convener to host the Glasgow University “*West End Lectures*”, he accepted with relish. From 2009 to 2012, he put his own stamp on the topics, his social history angle always topped off by a talk on a famous murder! This hosting role gave Colin enormous satisfaction, and he steadily re-established the solid audience base of this longstanding series.

Much closer to home – in fact beside his back garden – Old Station Park in Hyndland was in dire need of attention, so some local enthusiasts, including Colin, founded “*Friends of Old Station Park*” (FOSP) in 2008 with Neil Johnston as chairman. Annual Gala Days, public consultations and the sourcing of public funding followed. First to be upgraded was the upper level “Platform 1”, followed by installation of up-to-date “Children’s Play Area” equipment below.

The technical side of these largescale upgrades was efficiently handled by Colin as FOSP’s Project Leader. When he recently stepped down, his sterling contribution - liaising with council, funders and landscape designers - was given full recognition and appreciation. His legacy continues, as FOSP progresses with further works.

Colin’s other activities included active membership of Glasgow University’s General Council’s Business Committee, and recently he set up “*Hughenden Neighbourhood Watch*” with a group of local residents including Margaret Ogilvie, liaising with Hillhead Sports Club.

Always willing to volunteer, and not afraid to tackle any amount of paperwork, Colin was especially happy when meeting and greeting guests at events.

It is therefore with immense regret we note, that due to Colin’s sudden death in July, his personal presence, consistent support of friends in need, and valued contributions to civic life, will be much missed. Colin gave more to his local community in 5 short years, than most do in a lifetime.

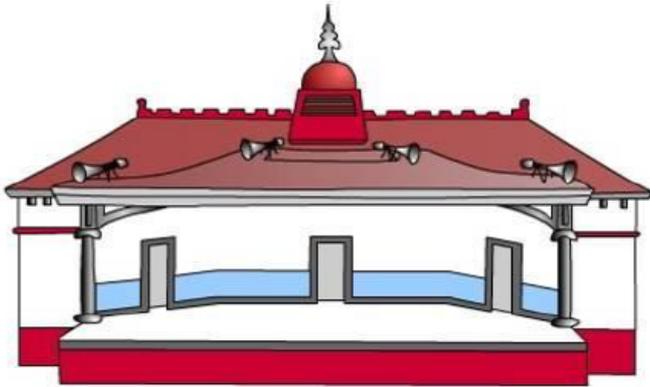
Ann Laird, Convener, July 2012

Photo, Tom Donald, 2011



Kelvingrove Bandstand and Amphitheatre

A personal view from FGW Vice-Convener David J Howat



Some of you will remember, like me, lazy, and perhaps even slightly hazy, summer afternoons in the 1970's and '80's when Radio Clyde organised free concerts at the Kelvingrove Bandstand. That the Bandstand and Amphitheatre finally closed in 1999 was a cause of great sadness. That the Bandstand and Amphitheatre have been allowed to fall into total and life threatening dereliction by the Council since then is nothing short of a disgrace.

The Commonwealth Games in 2014 will apparently bring with them a huge number of benefits for the people of Glasgow and no doubt we will all become healthier, slimmer and fitter as promised. But there has been an unexpected and really rather marvellous, if perhaps unforeseen, benefit of the forthcoming Games that will gladden the hearts of those of us interested in the built environment in the West End.

Having spent large sums of money refurbishing the bowling greens in Kelvingrove in order to host that exciting

event in the Games, it occurred to the powers that be that having this wonderful architectural gem and really rather useful city asset quietly mouldering a couple of hundred yards up the road was nothing short of an embarrassment.

And lo! Somehow, and from somewhere, comes a decision, a determination even, to have the Kelvingrove Bandstand and Amphitheatre refurbished and fully functional in time for the great Games.

Happily, the Council has placed this project in the entirely capable hands of Glasgow Building Preservation Trust under the leadership of their Chairperson, Ann McChlery.

Page and Park Architects have been appointed to do the design work.

Conservation Architects (Simpson & Brown) have been appointed to advise.

Sundry other consultants have been appointed to advise on services and structural engineering etc.

The key aims of the project are as follows:-

- To preserve the fabric of this unique building for the enjoyment of future generations
- To create an open-air performance space, fully equipped with modern facilities

and improved infrastructure to facilitate the hosting of a variety of events, both in terms of scale and technical requirements

- To improve the appearance of the park area and make it more welcoming and accessible for the general public, local residents and visitors to Glasgow

The estimated cost of the project is £1.4M. Funding has already been confirmed from Glasgow City Council Landfill Communities Fund. Applications will be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland, Creative Scotland, private donors and charitable trusts.

On 29 February Eric Kay and I attended a Community Consultation (the second we have attended) chaired by Ann McChlery. We heard interesting talks from John Sanders of Simpson & Brown, and Nicola Walls from Page\Park.

John Sanders emphasised the importance of the original building in its original setting, wherein it was possible to get views of the building from the other side of the Kelvin. He also particularly highlighted the fact that the audience members sitting in the amphitheatre would not only have a view of the stage, but had a good view on either side of the stage of the first phase of Kelvingrove Park. He thought that this was a significant part of the design. To an extent these views however are obscured by large trees now.

Nicola Walls has been working on modest redesigning of the amphitheatre which essentially involved putting in a wider path

running round the amphitheatre which would provide additional access. There were significant issues involved in providing disabled access, as the building, and the amphitheatre were (obviously) on a number of different levels. Initial thoughts were to try and achieve this by a series of ramps.

Anyone familiar with the work of Glasgow Building Preservation Trust, such as the Castlemilk Stables, will realise what a fabulous job the Trust are capable of commissioning. The challenge for Page and Park and the other advisers is to make the Bandstand and Amphitheatre fit for purpose in the modern era (which includes having proper health and safety features and disabled access) and capable of hosting small scale and large scale productions with ease, whilst maintaining the architectural integrity of the building and amphitheatre. I have to say that I came away with the impression that Page and Park, and the other advisers, fully appreciated the issues and challenges, and that the project was in extremely safe hands.

Even with bench seating, the capacity of the Amphitheatre is an astonishing 2,500, making it as big as the Royal Concert Hall. Perhaps, climate change permitting, the spirit of those hazy lazy afternoons of the '70's and '80's might be recaptured.

David J. Howat

September 2012

COTTIER INTERIOR DECORATION & ORGAN RESTORATION

David Robertson, Director, Four Acres Trust

Currently the porch, vestibule and organ gallery are the focus of attention, where the magnificent Father Willis organ will soon be returned from the workshops of Harrison and Harrison in Durham.

Ceiling and Wall Decoration

Before the restored organ is reinstalled, the damaged areas of lime plaster in and around the organ chamber must be consolidated. This forms part of a programme of works by specialist firm **Hare and Humphries**, who will also:

- **“reveal” the original ceiling decoration** by Daniel Cottier, which is currently lost to view beneath layers of paint.
- **redecorate the walls** around the organ, guided by research into Cottier’s original decorative scheme.
- **redecorate the first ceiling bay** of the arched hammer-beam roof vaults, as far down as the clerestorey window walls and spandrels.

Father Willis Organ, 1876

When the very fine Willis organ was first played in Dowanhill Church, the *Glasgow Herald* acknowledged that the congregation had good reason to be proud of it, but warned the organist to “beware of the powers at his command”.

The organ was so large that Cottier’s “David” and “Miriam” windows were relocated from behind the instrument, into the main body of the church.

The new organ chamber had previously housed the choir, and it was only after much discussion and controversy that the choir stalls were replaced to make way for the organ.

In the 1950's, the organ had its original console and mechanical action removed, but the Willis structure and pipework were retained without significant modification. In 1987 an outbreak of vandalism and attempted theft occurred, but was stopped in time to prevent serious loss.

In 2010-2012 Harrison and Harrison rebuilt the original organ console, restoring it to its original state. This entailed the creation of a new tracker action and Barker machine, new mechanical drawstop and composition actions, and a new console, all strictly in the style of Father Willis and based on contemporary examples.

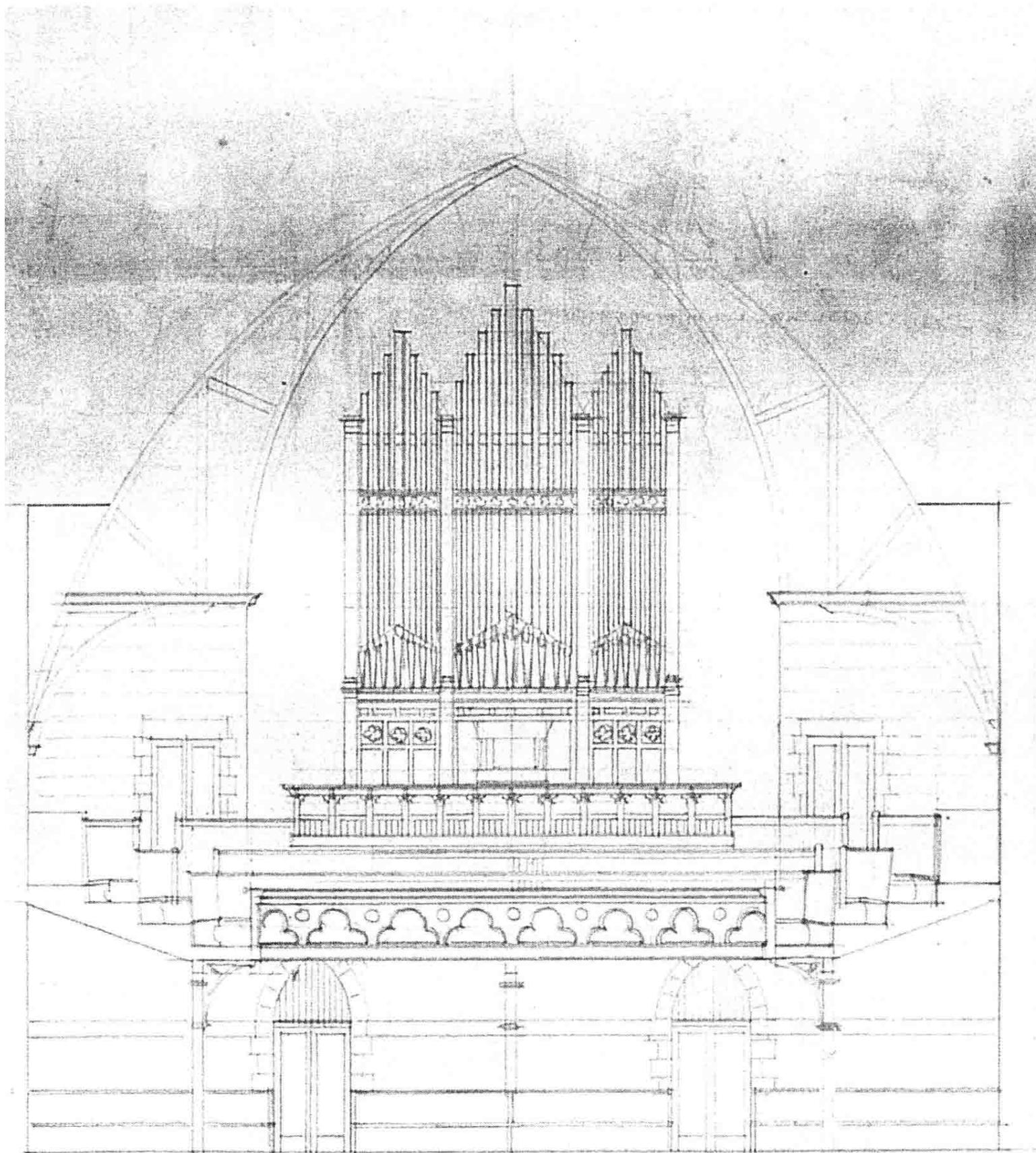
Interior Design around Organ

When completed, this year’s work will reveal a dramatic painted interior surrounding the organ.

Research has confirmed that the decoration in the choir area included large “Alpha” and “Omega” motifs which - when the decorators have finished their work - will once more be in view on either side of the organ.

The organ, once reinstalled, will make an important contribution to the future repertoire of musical recital possible within the building.

Front Cover Image: Daniel Cottier decoration to be reinstated in 2012.



*Measured Drawing of the Dowanhill Willis Organ Front before 1952.
Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.*

BYRES ROAD IMPROVEMENT - UPDATE

The Byres Road “Placemaking Consultation” took place in Hillhead Library in two parts, on 11 and 17 July. This consultation is provided by Greenspace Scotland, ably led by Deryck Irving.

This is one of five such consultations currently being undertaken by Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services, in a co-ordinated citywide project under the broad heading of looking at “climate change” issues.

We warmly welcome this initiative, and note that in the 20-year Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan, Byres Road is named, along with many others, as a street which is to be “Safeguarded” in the long term.

Byres Road also features in the Glasgow City Plan as a “town centre” - planning jargon for “shopping street”.

Both afternoons in Hillhead Library attracted a very good number and mix of participants. The events were judged very successful, and generated a LOT of interesting material.

This material is currently being compiled into a draft report by Greenspace Scotland.

In due course, after an internal Technical Review Meeting involving all relevant Council Officers, the final draft Placemaking Report and Action Plan will be published online, and intimated widely by email, for comment.

All the July consultees will also be invited to attend a meeting in Hillhead Library, to be organised by Friends of Glasgow West, and at which GCC will deliver a presentation on this final draft Report, providing further opportunity for comment.

The completed Byres Road Placemaking Report and Action Plan will take into account comments made on the draft, and will finally be published formally.

It is to be clearly understood from the outset, that the existence of a Report and Action Plan do not imply per se, that there is any finance linked to any the proposals.

However, a certain element of the proposals in such reports can actually be accomplished with rather small-scale resources and a lot of good will and co-operation - so we look forward to whatever FGW or any of the many players, can achieve

Please note that further information about timescales, details of proposed meeting etc, will be circulated to local community councils, elected members and the wider audience, as soon as they are available.

We can also report that the fledgling **Byres Road Traders Association** is currently working behind the scenes towards becoming formally incorporated, and again, we will provide information on further progress in due course.

Local Councillors representing various districts in Glasgow West Conservation Area from 3 May 2012

Within a Ward, the 4 elected Councillors may all work on any issues, anywhere within that specific Ward.

GWCA spans 4 Wards, so 16 councillors in total are directly involved – see below!





Victorian and Edwardian Pleasure Gardens: the Leafy West End

The natural landscape of Glasgow's West End originally consisted of a number of farms or small estates. These developed independently of each other between 1840 and 1914, creating distinct character areas or 'urban villages'. These eventually merged to form the present cityscape, with our many characteristic sandstone Terraces of spacious and elegant Victorian or Edwardian town houses.

In front of every terrace, stands its own communal green space, or private "pleasure garden": and with over seventy such terraces, graced today by mature trees and landscaped gardens, it is little wonder that we speak of the "Leafy West End". About 75% of the trees are limes, with others including sycamore, beech, horse chestnut, ash, holly, rowan and cherry.

There is a staggering variety of gardens and green spaces; from the formal pleasure gardens of Huntly and Athole Gardens to an eccentric row of trees sprouting from the middle of the road in Victoria Circus and the unique enclave of the Partickhill Oval, one of the most hidden pleasure gardens. If you find this place, see it in springtime, a large area surrounded by railings, with mature trees and bluebells, and you may imagine you have stumbled into the countryside!

Along the wide boulevard of Great Western Road are strips of grass and

trees which form a regimented green barrier between the grand terraced townhouses and the noise and fumes of 21st century traffic. Since the closing-off of the carriage entrances in the seventies, this strip is now almost continuous: Grosvenor, Kew, Belhaven, Great Western, Lancaster and Devonshire terrace on the south side, and Ruskin, Buckingham, Kirklee, Lowther, Redlands Terrace and Lancaster Crescent on the other.

Lime trees, originally selected for their suitability for pollarding, but now left to grow taller than the buildings, line the straight edges of these gardens, with holly and rhododendron shrubs below. Splendid stone gatepiers, originally crowned with lamps, formally mark the entrance to each terrace and its garden.

Individualism has crept into some of the terrace strips: in Marchmont and Rosslyn Terraces some owners have taken to cultivating the postage-stamp of garden in front of their own houses.

In other spots - Bowmont Terrace, for example - the whole garden has been left to decay into a wild neglect.

At Kelvinbridge, Lansdowne Crescent's pleasure gardens are in two delightful parts following the curving lines of the crescent itself. Well maintained and well used by residents, they are home to a great variety of plants and trees.

The 36 co-owners of the flats and houses in A Listed Crown Circus restored their very much “in the public eye”, but privately owned, communal gardens, via a major grant-funded project. The supporting wall was completely rebuilt, the cast iron railings replaced, and the garden replanted with trees. A “facelift” of the front of the terrace followed, completing the restoration of this most beautiful centrepiece of Dowanhill.

People are sometimes surprised that all of Hyndland’s elegant Edwardian tenemental streets, in aspiring to be as “West End” as possible, were intended to have their own modest “pleasure gardens”, complete with railings, grass and pollarded lime trees. However, only in Dudley Drive, Lauderdale Gardens, Queensborough Gardens and Airlie Street were these central gardens actually implemented – maybe just as well considering today’s traffic in Clarence Drive!



*Above left, gardens at Buckingham Terrace
Above right, central gardens in Kirklee Circus
Below, Queensborough Gardens, ca 1910.*



Victorian and Edwardian Pleasure Gardens... (cont)

In 1969, the council proposed a 6-lane "Great Western Road Expressway", complete with concrete footbridges and pedestrian underpasses, for a trunk road westwards out of the city. The gardens were under severe threat by compulsory purchase orders being served.

The indomitable Maureen Waddell led one of Glasgow's first "heritage conservation" campaigns, and, spurred on by Lord Esher's support, successfully preserved the gardens and terraces of Great Western Road, and the overall character of the West End. In recent years, the current owners of at least one Terrace have regained control by re-purchasing the garden from the Council.

Maintenance responsibilities for each private garden in the West End are written into the title deeds of the relevant property owners. Usually the owners form a Residents' Association to employ and pay a professional gardener conveniently in the long term, while others care for their gardens on an "as-and-when-necessary" basis. Then there's the fully structured approach: Princes Gardens, for example, has a thirty-year maintenance plan.

Many Associations have a very long history, some going back over a century, and today they offer excellent added potential to local community life. Belhaven Terrace West Owners Association holds an annual dinner for their residents, Kingsborough Gardens has participated in the West End Festival, and there is a splendid fireworks display every November in Westbourne Gardens. All these are unexpected side benefits of the private green spaces planned by the Victorian

developers as Pleasure Gardens, and now expanding their role in the 21st Century.

A systematic survey of traditional communal gardens of Glasgow's West End was carried out by FGW members Iain Wotherspoon, Seonaidh Gibson and Kate Richard. in an Awards for All "Millennium" project.

The following green spaces, the majority of them associated with traditional terraces, contribute to our very "Leafy" character:

DOWANHILL

Athole Gardens
Bowmont Gardens
Bowmont Terrace
Crown Circus
Crown Gardens
Crown Terrace
Foremount Terrace
Huntly Gardens
Kensington Gate
Kingsborough Gdns
Lorraine Gardens
Marchmont Terrace
Princes Gardens
Princes Terrace
Queens Gardens
Rosslyn Terrace
Victoria Circus

N. KELVINSIDE

Botanic Crescent
Doune Gardens
Holyrood Crescent
Lansdowne Cres
Raeberry Street
Striven Gardens
Wilton Street
Wilton Street Triangle
Wilton St, Gdns, Cres
Botanic Crescent
Doune Gardens
Holyrood Crescent

PARTICKHILL

Banavie Road
Partickhill Oval
Caird Drive

KELVINSIDE

Belhaven Terrace
Belhaven Terrace W.
Cleveden Crescent
Devonshire Gardens
Devonshire Terrace
Great Western Terr.
Grosvenor Terrace
Hughenden Drive
Kelvinside Terrace S.
Kew Terrace
Kirklee Circus
Kirklee Quadrant
Kirklee Terrace
Lancaster Crescent
Lancaster Terrace
Lowther Terrace
Redlands Terrace
Westbourne Gardens

HYNDLAND

Airlie Street
Dudley Drive
Lauderdale Gardens
Queensborough Gdns

HILLHEAD

Belgrave Terrace
Belmont Crescent
Buckingham Terrace
Great George St
Lilybank Gardens
North Park Terrace
Ruskin Terrace
Southpark Terrace
University Gardens