

THE BURGH ANGEL



IN THIS EDITION

Hamiltonhill Hits Back.

Pollok Park Saved! Court Rules Council Plan Illegal.

The Bridge: new website for all Glasgow Residents.

Campaign: City residents call for investment in housing.

!!! BUDGET SHOCKER !!!

Council chiefs have been informed by the Government that the city budget is to be cut by **£35 million** next year. The cut comes ahead of massive "austerity cuts" put in place to pay the banking bailout, which are set to amount to 13% cuts every year for the next five years after 2011.

DRAWING STEEL FROM GRANITE: Possil Tenants Enter Investment Battle With Giant City Landlord.



In a recent Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) press release, the stock transfer landlord noted that up to a 75% drop in housebreakings has been achieved in areas fitted with "secured by design" doors.

Hamiltonhill has been scheduled for demolition since 2008. Tenants in the area have been left in limbo, however, since the

massive crash in land values and financial crisis made the planned speculative developments (for which the centrally located neighbourhood was to be demolished to make way for) no longer viable, the area's future has been left in doubt.

In the meantime tenants have seen no significant investment. Streets have been left boarded up, but many still live in the area. There is constant speculation about what's happening to the scheme.

In recent months however tenants have started to come together on the estate to fight for investment and to demand that tenants are treated with **respect**. A poster campaign was followed with a community survey. The survey group asked their neighbours their priorities for change in the area. From this a programme has emerged for the new Hamiltonhill Action Group.

The group's first action was to survey the close doors in the neighbourhood. With nearly half of all close doors found by the group to be broken or vandalised tenants wrote to the GHA to demand immediate action. 17 repairs were understood to have been carried out. Many have since been broken once more, so tenants are demanding that steel "secured by design" doors are fitted on the estate.

In a letter to the Chief Executive of the GHA the action group demand a timetable for the doors to be fitted by the end of August.

Embattled tenants have told the Angel that they will "**draw steel from Granite**" (a reference to the headquarters of the GHA, the city's giant landlord). Unless the Group's demands are met by the end of the month campaign organizers for the Group will take their campaign to the Scottish Tenants Organisation. The Angel understands that plans for a "**very robust response**" are now being put into motion.

"**They will rue the day they ignored Hamiltonhill!**" The Action Group states, summarising their position.

Pollok Park Victory: Council Acted Outside The Law

Statement by Save Pollok Park Group On The Court's Verdict In Campaigner's Favour

On 12th June Glasgow Council finally gave in and abandoned the idea of of Go Ape in Pollok Park

Thanks to all our supporters - we knew we spoke for the majority and could prove it - they thought we would gradually go away - but were wrong

In their press statement the Council and Go Ape tried to save face - that is to be expected - but they and we know that they simply could not overcome the legal and financial mess they go into - and which we have been pointing out for 18 months

We established that Pollok Park (and Knowehead Lodge) are part of the Common Good and they would have had to go to court to remove them

This would have cost either Glasgow Council tax payers or Go Ape tens of thousands of pounds - and legal precedents are such that it is likely they would have lost (and the case would have taken several years)

The NTS had not given its required consent for the proposals as they stood. The idea to use Knowehead Lodge as a way round this was thought up in desperation and got nowhere

It is clear that Glasgow Councillors (and Go Ape) were misled by Land Services from the beginning

Go Ape and Glasgow Council thought we would just go away- but we have shown that we understood the legal status of Pollok Park better than them - and won round many politicians at local and national level through our reasoned arguments and independent legal opinions



This is North Wood as it will now remain - the young people and adults of Glasgow do not need commercial attractions to continue to enjoy our parks

“OFFICIAL: Pollok Park Belongs to Us!”

“WE HAVE ESTABLISHED USING INDEPEDENT AND EXPERT LEGAL OPINION THAT POLLOK PARK BELONGS TO US - IT IS PART OF THE COMMON GOOD

“IT CANNOT BE LEASED WITHOUT A COURT ORDER AND ANY INCOME BELONGS TO THE COMMON GOOD AND NOT COUNCIL SERVICES

“WE SAY THAT AS IT WAS A GIFT TO US IN PERPETUITY WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY FOR THE USE OF ANY PART OF IT”

Picnic in the Park

SUN 23rd August; 2PM; Beside the Burrell

Tug o' war: The Council vs. The People (and other games)

Come and celebrate our double victory!

In seeing off Go Ape and official recognition of Pollok Park as Common Good land - Sunday 23rd August at 2.00pm – See: www.savepollokpark.com

We are a group of park users and many others (over 5000 signatures) who successfully opposed Glasgow City Council's proposal to give a 21 years lease covering a large part of the North Wood of Pollok Park to Adventure Forest Ltd to develop a "GO APE " facility

Bring food, children, dogs.

“SCOTLAND'S FOR COUNCIL HOUSING” Stall

Tenants Campaign Announces Glasgow Initiative

Every Friday from 3PM till 5PM, from now on tenants campaigners, involved with the Scottish Organisation and Scottish Trades Union Congress backed campaign, for investment in Council Housing, will be holding a protest stall outside GHA headquarters, **Granite House, 117 Trongate** to force the GHA and housing authorities to invest in homes and new, high quality Council housing.

www.scottishtenants.org.uk | www.news.scottishtenants.org.uk

SPECIAL FEATURE: Why does Hamiltonhill Action Group call for secure entry steel doors for its closes?

SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD | CLOSE DOORS IDENTIFIED AS A PROBLEM

"I am very frightened as a single female living with my dog [...] I'm frightened of what will happen next. My car was deemed economically unsalvageable [...] I've been told if I ever have my car back in the street or ANY car, the junkies will destroy it. I was told this to my face and recently was put in hospital by this person." [via email to the Action Group]

"We have stayed here 9 years, and our door always opens when you press the service button, at anytime. They don't think there is anything wrong with that." [via text message to Action Group]

" My [...] biggest concerns are: drug users, security of entrances of the close, the mess of the gardens, the mess of the closes." [feedback in tenants survey]

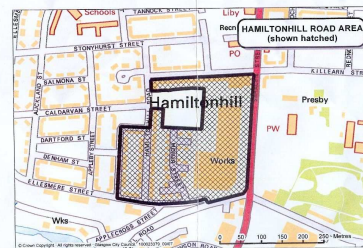
"Five biggest priorities I have in Hamiltonhill Road houses and scheme are dampness in houses, rent increases, surrounded by drug addicts, and houses being broken into. Also intercom not been working for about three years. Front close door is insecure." [feedback in tenants survey]

In a recent survey conducted by the Hamiltonhill Action Group 25 of the areas 50 or so close doors were found to have been broken into and in need of repair. When the issue was raised with the landlord, prompt action ensued. The landlord cynically tried to co-opt the Action Group immediately.

"We do have community representatives on our management committee who worked hard for the local residents in the area. We are always looking for local champions to join, so you would be more than welcome to come along."

But Hamiltonhill, it was revealed in 2006 and 2007, has actually been the subject of extremely large underspends of GHA cash allocated to the scheme for routine repairs and maintenance. Those community representatives could hardly be said to be effective! It has seen **66%+ underspends**.

Tenants are routinely patronised with the latest schemes being adopted to gradually demolish the homes in the community. Most recently (since the present plan of 'phased demolition', over 5 years, was announced last autumn, before the financial crash) tenants were informed the council suspected there may be toxic waste beneath local's houses. A contemptuous map accompanied the announcement of 'investigations' (which may of course have led to the houses 'needing to be demolished'), which had a large rectangle surrounding newly-built private flats and terraced housing in the centre of the scheme; apparently those homes had not been exposed to the contamination! (Before 1929, locals confirm that the area had been a rural farm. It was never industrialised).



Site Investigations

- Bonhill Street
- Cleghorn Street
- Eileasmore Street
- Hamiltonhill Road
- Kessock Drive
- Kessock Place
- Killiearn Street
- Monar Drive
- Monar Place
- Monar Street
- Saracen Street

INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS



For further information contact:
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← Much of the scheme awaits demolition. GHA has been slow to act to remove cleared buildings, attracting arson attacks.

Because of a perception, or prejudice that the area is run-down, the council does not properly maintain the area, adding to a sense of neglect. →



THE BRIDGE WEBSITE: www.bridgeweb.info

My name is Bob Hamilton I run City Strolls website. The Bridge is a network which will allow groups and people to interact with what they are doing in their communities.

Why is The Bridge needed when lots of engaged citizens are already on email, and using facebook, bebo and mspace?

The Bridge is dealing with more specific information. Facebook and such like produce too much distracting noise, adverts, fluff. The bridge is run on open source (free) technology and is part of the idea of how we create our own networks - and rely less on Proprietary software (not free).

What benefits are there to online communication like The Bridge, as opposed to more traditional means of getting our point across in communities?

I suppose to reach a bigger audience and make material more widely available. But the internet is only one medium among many others. The Bridge cannot replace physical media or human contact - these are the best true and tested communication methods we have. Bridge could be a helpful tool towards these activities.

What made you want to see this project happen?

Because of the lack of communication between people involved in the same type of work or activities.

You have been active in the community a while Bob. What changes have you seen in the way active citizens have used communication technology to fight their community's corner? What changes do you see on the horizon?

This is still a relatively new technology being constantly developed - we are still learning how to use it. The internet is very important in our lives, we need to defend its freedom and use it sensibly, not just for the sake of it, otherwise it will just end up like television.

The site is up and running now. What are your hopes for how the site will grow and become useful to active citizens and residents across the city?

Well that will be entirely up to users - you can take a horse to water and all that. What I and a few others will do is keep the site running, it is a lot of work I must say. It is really up to the users who may find it useful - or more importantly "make it useful"

What about Glasgowguide and Glesgapals (two other prominent Glasgow onlineforums), how do you hope to relate to them, and what do you think The Bridge can bring to this city's communities, streets and neighbourhoods?

Hopefully the Bridge can bring coordination to events and issues happening not just around Glasgow but the world in general, because human needs and community needs are much the same everywhere. Three things I would say. I do not build websites to make friends (I could think of better ways) I do it because I want to win something - that's why I am involved in the struggle. Two is. I believe there should be a "responsibility of association" by those involved in ground-up social change - which is one of the main purposes of the Bridge, to create associations. And three. I believe in using the tools at our disposal and the internet is quite a good way of organising these associations. Not the only way but a very important tool that should be taken seriously. I am happy to connect to anything that even vaguely follows these principals. But then the Bridge is not me. I am a member. And the same as any trade union, the Bridge is only as good as its members make it.

www.burghangel.org.uk - News that matters.



The Burgh Angel Contact Details

The Burgh Angel can be contacted as follows. If you are letting us know about your views, or some news you think we should report, please tell us whether or not we can publish your name.

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