



# Kelvin Valley Park NEWS

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## OPPORTUNITIES



**COULD THE KELVIN VALLEY** become a Walkers paradise? On this page we feature several initiatives by the Friends to help bring this about. Our Walkers are Welcome

campaign, new paths network leaflet and proposed heritage trails should all help more people enjoy the Kelvin Valley, visitors and residents alike. Supporting these initiatives, Councillor Mark Griffin in his Viewpoint column calls for a local 'Walk a Week' campaign to help boost local health and fitness.

Signs are good that this is already happening. British Waterways report a 75% increase to nearly 80,000 people crossing their Craigmarloch counter in 2007. This is just one counter on one path.

Take all the other attractions like Auchinstarry basin and quarry, Colzium estate, Antonine Wall, Dumbreck Nature Reserve, our 100km path network, and the number of people enjoying the valley is probably over one million.

Other important initiatives include the new hotel at Auchinstarry, progress on the World Heritage Site status for the Antonine wall and the new Community forest planned for Nethercroy.

We also had great hopes for major funding from the Leader Bid. Whilst we have only received a disappointing 20% of the bid, this will still bring an extra £1million investment to the Valley over the next five years,

including match funding. The friendships and goodwill built up between the councils, agencies and voluntary bodies working on the bid, including the Friends, will ensure good co-operation in the future.

## Valley Welcomes Walkers

**T**HE KELVIN Valley's already warm welcome for walkers is now getting a good deal warmer, thanks to several initiatives by the Friends of the Kelvin Valley Park.

'Walkers are Welcome' is a new UK wide project that will bring much needed publicity to the towns which gain accreditation. To qualify, towns must demonstrate local support, have formal support by the local council, keep rights of way in good condition, market the Walkers are Welcome status, encourage walking using local transport and have a local steering group to look after the project.

The Friends campaign is well under way. Friends chairman James Hunt has won the backing of many local community groups including Kilsyth and Villages Community Forum, Croy Community Council and Kilsyth Community Council. North Lanarkshire Council has given its full support, publicity in North Lanarkshire News and financial help. A petition in favour has already gained hundreds of signatures and the campaign has featured in the local press.

The valley already has at least fifty paths totalling over 100km for the public to enjoy. About half of these are

signposted and many are surfaced. The extensive path network is described in the Friends Path Network Leaflet, which was given a resounding launch earlier this year. Four thousand copies have been printed and many already distributed, including to local libraries and sports facilities.

Another valuable initiative is the Heritage Paths Project kicked off by the Scottish Rights of Way Society.

A Scotland wide book of heritage paths will be produced, and the Friends have submitted three, in conjunction with Croy Historical Society. These are a Canal Trail, Antonine Trail and a Miners Trail.

The importance of the local path network is recognised by North Lanarkshire Council, who have produced a comprehensive Core Paths Plan. Public use of the paths is well shown by the leap in figures at British Waterways' people counter at Craigmarloch. See more inside on these important developments.

**LATE NEWS:** We have just heard that Kilsyth has now been accredited as a Walkers are Welcome town, the second in Scotland to achieve this landmark new status.



Friends launch Paths Leaflet  
(photo: Kilsyth Chronicle)

## Canal Basin transformed

**A**UCHINSTARRY canal basin has been transformed with extensive planting and construction of the new hotel. Over one hundred volunteers joined the Waterways Trust in March to plant large numbers of trees including beech and holly, and a wide variety of wild flowers. The volunteers were joined by children from Holy Cross primary school in Croy who have been making wooden sculptures of native plants and animals.

April's events include stone carving by Kilsyth Academy pupils and sculptor Barry Groves will be working with children from Kilsyth Primary and Banton Primary. Around 60 volunteers are making wooden benches, planting shrubs, laying turves and putting up bird and bat boxes. The wooden benches are being made out of old lock gates, forging a link between the old canal and the new sensory garden.



## Planning Matters

**P**LANS of crucial importance to the Kelvin Valley are currently being prepared by North Lanarkshire Council. The Local Development Plan is moving forwards with policy reports being prepared on industrial land, housing, wind farms, green belt review, and the results of last years extensive consultation exercise. These are expected to be finalised and approved by councillors with the start of stage 2 public consultations in January 2009.

The Core Path Plan is also well under way. Following public consultation, a very comprehensive report was produced in February. The maps show the Kelvin Valley as being one of the most important areas in North

Auchinstarry's impressive new hotel, The Boathouse, [www.boathousekilsyth.com](http://www.boathousekilsyth.com) opens to the public in late April in time for the summer season.

At Twechar work is under way on a new slipway, access road, mobile crane platform and pontoon.

Other possibilities including a community boathouse, shop, visitor centre and bunkhouse are being considered by Twechar regeneration group. Councillor Billy Hendry and Twechar Regeneration Manager John Gray performed the groundbreaking ceremony in March.

At Craigmarloch the number of people walking, cycling and jogging along the towpath past the pedestrian counter shot up last year. The 2007 total was 79,556 compared with 45,051 in 2006, an increase of over 75%. British Waterways plan to install a further pedestrian counter at Auchinstarry Basin.

Lanarkshire for public paths. Public response to the report will be taken into account in preparing amended maps later this year, leading towards eventual adoption by the council.

Housing development at Cavalry Park remains a concern. Since the development was approved by the Council, it has emerged that flood relief works will be required within the publicly owned Colzium Estate to allow the development to proceed. This could include tree felling, bank raising and spillway construction.

The Friends are seeking assurances that there will be no tree felling, any works will be in keeping with the Estate and that public access will be maintained.

## VIEWPOINT



MANY YEARS of campaigning by local people for the Kelvin Valley have been shown to be truly worthwhile with tremendous

developments in recent years.

The Kelvin Valley has been shown to be a true asset for our local Community and the improvements that have been made continue to boost our local economy and tourist profile.

I was delighted to attend the recent launch of the latest initiative, the Kelvin Valley Park Path Network, which highlights to local people the variety of local paths and

walkways on their doorstep. The "Walkers are Welcome" campaign which has come about as a result of this path network is also a great way of increasing the national profile of the Kelvin Valley and if successful should provide an increase in visitors to the area.

With the publication of the path network showing over fifty paths, the Walkers are Welcome national campaign could also be supplemented by a local 'Walk a Week' campaign to get the people living in the local area out walking on our path network with the possibility of walking a different route each week. This would provide an attractive way of boosting the health and fitness of our local population.

As a newly elected member for the area I look forward to working closely with the Friends of the Kelvin Valley Park to continue the improvement of the valley to the benefit of our local community.

*Councillor Mark Griffin*

## Special History Supplement

Unclip, fold into panels and keep this special supplement as a handy pocket guide to the last two thousand years of history in the Kelvin Valley.

FOR A KELVIN VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE PARK

## Woodland turns old tips into new forest

**O**LD INDUSTRIAL scars are to be transformed by new community woodland under plans put forward by the Forestry Commission at their recent consultation for Nethercroy.

The old coal and ironstone bings will be landscaped and planted with broad leaved trees. The old whinstone quarries will be made safer whilst preserving their wildlife habitat. Broadleaf planting will be used to extend the existing natural woodlands at Craigmarloch and Nethercroy and parkland planting will enhance the pasture fields.

Footpath links have already been improved and this will continue with the renewal of the 'Soon Cut' from Croy to Auchinstarry Basin. An improved link from Nethercroy will be made up to the old railway path, and the railway path will be linked to Dullatur. The old path along the south bank of the canal to Craigmarloch will be improved in keeping with the natural landscape.

**Taking in the view from Nethercroy**  
(photo: Forestry Commission Scotland)



### IN BRIEF



**CLANRANALD TRUST** is making major progress with their motte & bailey construction at Carron Valley. A palisade fence is being constructed on top of the motte embankment and a stone archway is being constructed to the visitor centre site. Future plans include erection of a visitor centre and construction of a medieval village in the motte. Regular school visits already take place and the site will be open to the public in the autumn.

**A CUMBERNAULD ENVIRONMENT** Committee has been established by Cumbernauld Community Forum to coordinate environmental campaigning in the new town. Contact Bobby Johnson on 01 236 73831.

**KILSYTH INTERNATIONAL CARNIVAL** committee are planning a major Kelvin Valley Festival for 2009 with events throughout the area from the 7th to 15th August.

**STRATHKELVIN RAMBLERS** have been out and about in the Kelvin Valley including walks to Dumbreck Marsh, the Antonine Wall, Forth & Clyde Canal and Colzium. Contact Penny Sinclair on 0141 776 6709.

**BURNGREEN PARK FRIENDS** (below) are working with North Lanarkshire Council on a final grant application for major improvements in the park. The committee also want people to volunteer for their conservation Group to work in the park, and can also arrange events for schools and corporate volunteers.

Contact Fiona Murdoch on 01698 420863.



**LEADER FUNDING** of approximately half a million pounds has been won for projects in the Kelvin Valley. This is only 20% of the amount hoped for, but it will still make a useful contribution to local regeneration.

A local action group is being set up to manage the funding under the lead of North Lanarkshire Council.

**COWDENHILL QUARRY** extension appeal has been turned down marking a victory for Banknock residents group BRACE.



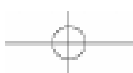
**SNOWDROP FESTIVAL** held at Colzium House in February by Kilsyth Community Council was a great success including children's activities, guided walks and museum opening.

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND** are progressing their World Heritage Site bid for the Antonine Wall including preparing a detailed Management Plan. A special UNESCO committee will make a formal decision on the award in July.

**KAYAKING COMPETITION** drew 50 competitors to the Auchinstarry - Windford stretch of the canal on Sunday 30th March with events for all ages and abilities.

A canoe marathon all the way from Glasgow to Edinburgh is being held on 26th April.

ENJOYING ALL OUR OUTDOOR ATTRACTIONS



## WHAT'S ON FOCUS

### APRIL

Wednesday 23rd April

**AUCHINSTARRY VOLUNTEERING**  
Help make benches, plant shrubs and lay turf Waterways Trust. Alison Morrison  
01324 677 822

### MAY

Wednesday 7th May, Prof. W. Maley: Talk at Croy 7.00pm Thurs, Fri & Sat, 12noon till 9.30pm **TALKS & EXHIBITION OPEN DAYS** Croy Historical Society [e-mail: mail@croysthistorical.org.uk](mailto:mail@croysthistorical.org.uk)

Saturday 10th May - 9am

**COLZIUM CHORUS** Eniovs spring birdsong. Friends of Kelvin Valley Park. Paul Carter  
01236 822437

Sunday 11th May - 1.30pm

**CANAL CRUISE** Auchinstarry marina to Wyndford Lock and back. F & C Canal Society. Tom Lawton 0141 772 1620



Picture: North Lanarkshire Rangers

Sunday 11th May - 7.30pm

**BAT DETECTING** Dumbreck Marsh nature reserve. NLC Ranger Ruth McGuire 01236 780636

Sunday 25th May - 10.00am

**WILDLIFE WALK** Auchinstarry quarry to Dumbreck Marsh Scottish Wildlife Trust. Patricia Stewart 0141 775 3850

Tuesday 27th May - 9.50am

**CANAL RAMBLE** Auchinstarry, Kelvinhead, Banton Loch & Kilsyth. C & K Ramblers. Hilary Shearer 01236 780136

### JUNE

Wednesday 4th June

**WILDLIFE WALK** Dumbreck Marsh nature reserve. Call 0141 956 6586

Sunday 8th June **WILDLIFE**

**CELEBRATION** Discover wildlife at Dumbreck Marsh NLC Rangers.  
Ruth McGuire 01236 780636

Week 14 - 21st June **KILSYTH CIVIC WEEK** Fun and games with many outdoor events.

Saturday 21st June - 10.30am  
**HISTORICAL LAUNCH & WALK**  
Talk and Walk on local history

Croy Historical Society. Seamus Coleman on 01236 722662

Tuesday 24th June - 10.00am

**VALLEY RAMBLE** Kilsyth Circular C & K Ramblers. Call 01236 780136

### JULY

Tuesday 29th July - 10am

**HILLS RAMBLE** Kilsyth, Banton, Drumessie and Tak Ma Doon Road  
C & K Ramblers. Call 01236 780136

### AUGUST

Tuesday 7th August - afternoon  
**TWECHAR WILDLIFE** Wildlife adventure afternoon for young folk E. D. Rangers.  
Call 0141 956 6586

Saturday 16th August - all day

**SUMMIT MUSTER** Auchinstarry basin boaters' gathering SIWA. Andy Carnduff  
01383 860306

Tuesday 19th August - 9.50am

**MARSH RAMBLE** Auchinstarry to Kilsyth via Dumbreck Marsh C & K Ramblers.  
Hilary Shearer 01236 780136

### SEPTEMBER

Sat & Sun 13th - 14th Sept

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE DOORS**

**OPEN DAY** Including walks and talks on local heritage. F. of K.V.P. Paul Carter on 01236 822437

### REGULAR EVENTS

Tuesdays **WEEKLY WALKS**

Starting from Garrel Vale Community Centre, Fitness At Fresco. Tom Harker on 01236 828160

3rd Saturdays **MONTHLY WALKS**

Kelvin Valley Walkers Link  
William MacLachlan 01236 825656

Tuesdays - 6.15pm **KAYAKING**

## ABOUT US

### Friends of the Kelvin Valley Park



Formed in 2005 to promote a Kelvin Valley countryside park. Committee members are residents of Kilsyth, Cumbernauld and the villages and include Paul Carter, James Coleman, James Hunt, Ian Jarvis, Rob Kay and Bill Taylor. Members are active in a range of activities in the valley including canals, rambling, wildlife, local history, carnival, path network etc. The 'Friends' meet with a range of organisations to encourage appropriate countryside developments and publish the Kelvin Valley Park News.

We are keen to talk to any local groups about our aims - please get in touch.

### Kelvin Valley Park News

The 'News' is published in Spring and Autumn and covers outdoor events, activities and developments in the Kelvin Valley. One thousand copies of each issue are circulated free to Councillors, Members of Parliament, Schools, Libraries, local communities and outdoor organisations and the general public. We welcome news and good quality photographs.

### Advertising

A variety of advertising options are available within this newsletter. We can scan in your colour or black and white artwork or typeset your advert if required. Call the number below for more information.

### Acknowledgments

Thank you to all our contributors for news and photos, Croy Historical Society for logistical help and the Cumbernauld News and Kilsyth Chronicle for publicising our events. Many thanks to Central Scotland Forest Trust for

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