north lanarkshire council

kelvin valley action plan
final report

september 2002
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1.1 North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) and Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire (SEL) commissioned a consultant team led by yellow book\textsuperscript{1} to prepare a development framework and action plan for the economic and social regeneration of the Forth & Clyde Canal.

THE BRIEF

1.2 The aim of the project was to examine the economic and social opportunities associated with the Forth & Clyde Canal and to produce a framework to guide canal related investment in the study area. The brief stated that the framework should be based on three key themes:

- achieving sustainable development
- maximising social and economic benefits
- safeguarding and improving the environmental quality of the area

1.3 The designated study area comprises:

- a section of the Kelvin Valley (including the restored Forth & Clyde Canal) from the Castlecary viaduct in the east, to Auchinstarry in the west
- the town of Kilsyth, including the Colzium estate
- the village of Croy

\textsuperscript{1} The consultant team comprises yellow book, Willie Miller Urban Design and Kevin Murray Associates
AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE KELVIN VALLEY

1.4 The consultant team has focused on this study area, although we have treated the boundary flexibly. In our original response to the brief - and again at an early meeting with the clients - we suggested that, while the canal was a key element of the study area it was by no means the only significant catalyst for change. We recommended that the study should be framed within the wider Kelvin Valley context, and this was agreed.

WORK PROGRAMME

1.5 The work programme has comprised three key stages:

• research, consultations and analysis
• strategy formulation
• reporting

1.6 The key elements of the first stage were as follows:

• a commissioning meeting which gave the clients an opportunity to communicate their goals and aspirations for the study
• an extensive programme of consultations with the clients, key partners and stakeholders
• a review of reports and policy documents
• a series of site visits to study key locations and establish the wider landscape context

1.7 The key elements of the second stage were as follows:

• a consultant team workshop to assess emerging findings from stage one
• preparation of a progress report and presentation
• a client workshop, held on 12 June
• a revised presentation
• a community consultation, at Colzium House on 3 July

1.8 The consultants received generally positive feedback following the client workshop, and a revised proposition also commanded a high level of support at the community workshop. This final report builds on the outcomes of those two events.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

1.9 The report is in 5 sections:

• Section 2 contains a review of the policy context for the study
• Section 3 contains a concise audit of the study area, its present condition and prospects, and sets out our conclusions
• Section 4 sets out a 10-year vision for the Kelvin Valley and identifies objectives and priorities for action
• Section 5 sets out a proposed 5-year action plan and addresses issues of delivery and funding

Gap site: Main Street, Kilsyth
This section reviews the policy context for the study area. In the following pages we review key documents including:

- *The Millennium Link: an outline framework of action* (report by Pieda for Scottish Enterprise)
- *Scotland’s Canals: an asset for the future* (Scottish Executive/British Waterways)
- *Transforming Lanarkshire’s Town Centres* (yellow book report for SEL, NLC, South Lanarkshire Council and Communities Scotland)
- *Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan*
- *Kilsyth Local Plan* (NLC)
- *Forth & Clyde Canal Local Plan* (Working Group)
- *North Lanarkshire Strategic Development Framework* (NLC)
- *Kilsyth Town Centre Study* – CB Hiller Parker.

**MILLENIUM LINK: AN OUTLINE FRAMEWORK OF ACTION**

This document was the last in a series prepared by Pieda in support of the Millennium Link project. The objective of the plan was to create a major economic asset by:

- developing support services and facilities for canal users, and
2.3 The plan is based on a strategic framework intended to ensure that:

- the restored canals become a major new tourism and leisure asset
- the development potential of operating and other sites is realised
- key tourism nodes (and secondary nodes) are established
- the development of new small businesses is stimulated
- regeneration effects are maximised by clustering projects
- employment and training opportunities are secured for disadvantaged people

2.4 The document identifies Auchinstarry as one of 15 principal service locations on the Millennium Link. It would be one of only four locations to offer a full range of services for canal users including:

- overnight moorings
- effluent disposal
- pump out facilities
- boats for hire and permanent moorings
2.5 Auchinstarry is identified in the development strategy as a site of strategic/operational importance, presenting short-term (0-5 year) opportunities for a marina development that would yield “moderate” economic benefit.

2.6 While Auchinstarry was identified as a high priority, the potential redevelopment of stables at Craigmarloch for a “pub/restaurant or bunkhouse” was described as a moderate priority, constrained by environmental and land ownership factors.

2.7 Auchinstarry remains the priority for development as far as British Waterways are concerned (see Section 3). The basin is approximately the mid-point for boats making coast-to-coast journeys, and this – combined with existing infrastructure and an attractive rural setting – makes Auchinstarry an ideal stopover point.

2.8 In May 2003, representatives of British Waterways (BW) and Scottish Enterprise confirmed that Auchinstarry remained a key priority when they gave evidence to the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee on the Job Creation Potential of the Modernised Forth, Clyde and Scottish Union Canal.

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**SCOTLAND’S CANALS: AN ASSET FOR THE FUTURE**

2.9 This joint Scottish Executive/BW statement argues that Scotland’s canals are an asset that, if used effectively, can enhance the quality of life and help to deliver wider policy objectives.

2.10 Scotland’s Canals sets out a strategy based on 5 principles:

- increasing awareness of the canal network and encouraging private sector investment
- encouraging public bodies and local authorities to work together to support the canal network for sustainable development and regeneration
- promoting voluntary sector and community involvement in canals
- ensuring that policy makers take account of the sustainable development potential of canals
- BW will continue to discharge its statutory duties and to help progress new initiatives.

2.11 The Executive see canals as a catalysts for wider change in rural areas like the Kelvin Valley because:

- the canal network provides a focus for tourism
- the parkland environment provides a community and recreational asset
• They will stimulate *business ventures* such as waterside pubs, restaurants and marinas
• Canals provide *housing development* opportunities consistent with the scale of the waterway.

**TRANSFORMING LANARKSHIRE TOWN CENTRES**

2.12 In 2001-02, a consultant team led by *yellow book* carried out a major study to develop a *strategic framework for intervention in 18 Lanarkshire town centres*, including Kilsyth.

2.13 In an Annex to the report, *yellow book* described how the decline of retail, business and civic uses in Kilsyth town centre had resulted in the “hollowing out” of the urban heart, reflected in gap sites and derelict and under-utilised buildings. It was noted that these conditions were typical of many small former industrial towns in central Scotland, although Kilsyth was unusual in both its architectural quality and potential, and the severity of decline.

2.14 Despite the very fragile condition of the town centre, the report argued that a re-invented Kilsyth could be one of Lanarkshire's *special places*. It might be an appropriate location for an urban village, designed to attract new residents, but also new activities such as crafts, speciality shopping, food and drink.

**POLICY REVIEW**

2.15 In the following paragraphs we review key aspects of planning policy relating to the study area, with a particular focus on the canal. This summary is based closely on the *North Lanarkshire Forth and Clyde Canal Position Statement* (2003) prepared by NLC’s Department of Planning and Environment.

**GLASGOW + CLYDE VALLEY JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN**

2.16 The key points in the Structure Plan relating to the Forth & Clyde Canal are:

• The canal is recognised as a national priority
• The promotion and management of the Millennium Link Corridor will maximise urban renewal and sustain rural communities
• The canal supports tourism-related developments
• The canal is classified as a national resource with Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) status; there would be a presumption against development that would have a significant adverse effect on the SAM

2.17 The Structure Plan also identifies:

• Kilsyth as one of the town centres to be safeguarded through Structure and Local Plans
the Millennium Link Corridor as a priority for promotion and management within the green network
• a proposal to create a Campsies Regional Park
• the Kelvin Valley as one of the green belt structural corridors separating major parts of the conurbation

KILSYTH LOCAL PLAN

2.18 Kilsyth Local Plan (issued in 1999) sets out a list of key objectives for the area. The most relevant of these – as they relate to this study – are as follows:

• Housing: range and quality of housing opportunities for all forms of tenure
• Business: safeguard existing and attract new business
• Shopping: improve quality and choice of retail provision
• Greenbelt: a defensible and sustainable greenbelt
• Natural environment: protect wildlife and ecology and encourage diversification
• Tourism: develop existing and new visitor attractions, and raise area profile
• Recreation: provide a range of accessible facilities and promote participation

2.19 The Local Plan highlights:

• the “overwhelmingly rural” character of the area; the presence of sites of ecological and scientific interest (including Dullatur Marsh); and the Kilsyth Hills Regional Scenic Area
• the Kilsyth Conservation Area; the Antonine Wall, especially the fort at Croy Hill
• the above average proportion of public rented housing, and the “substantial capacity” for new housing
• the long-term decline of traditional industries, an increase in out-commuting and the decline in the status of Kilsyth as a shopping centre
• the area’s “undeveloped potential for outdoor recreation”, especially Dumbreck Local Nature Reserve, Colzium-Lennox Estate, the Antonine Wall, the Forth & Clyde Canal and Auchinstarry Quarry.

2.20 The Forth and Clyde Canal Corridor is located within the Green Belt. Green Belt Policies GB 1 to GB7 provide the policy framework for development, protection and enhancement.

2.21 The Local Plan identifies the potential to enhance and expand tourism, and identifies the following locations where canal-related development will be undertaken:

• picnic sites: Craigmarloch – Wyndford
• landing stages: Wyndford, Auchinstarry and Craigmarloch
• replacement lock gate: Wyndford
FORTH & CLYDE CANAL LOCAL PLAN

2.22 The main aim of the Plan, which was adopted in 1996, was to promote, preserve and enhance the Canal across the seven Local Authority areas. The Plan (which, of course, predates the Millennium Link) recognised the unique rural character of the North Lanarkshire section of the canal, and aimed to preserve the countryside setting.

2.23 The Plan described the Canal as a significant but under-utilised water recreation asset, a description that still applies today. Although the Plan does not fully reflect conditions since the Millennium Link was completed, it remains consistent with the Local Plan’s social, economic and environmental benefits.

N LANARKSHIRE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

2.24 This document, issued in 2001, recognises that the Millennium Link has a significant contribution to make to Lanarkshire’s rural and tourism strategies.

2.25 The Framework’s main focus for the Forth & Clyde Canal is to:

- promote the Millennium Link (and the Campsie Fells) as tourism development areas and linking them to Kilsyth
- protecting, interpreting and managing access to the canal, the Antonine Wall and the Fells.

Grounds of Colzium House
RECENT STUDIES

2.26 A number of recent studies have addressed aspects of the study area. Key findings and recommendations are summarised below.

2.27 A report by Halcrow Fox on access issues proposes a range of footpath and signage projects and recommends a Round Town Route for Kilsyth, linking a number of key locations and attractions.

2.28 A recent study by Stevens Associates recommended that Colzium House could become a ‘hub’ of recreational and tourist activity, and a gateway for exploration of the wider area. The report recommends improving links between the estate and the canal, combined with improved access to and around Banton Loch.

2.29 CB Hillier Parker’s, Kilsyth Town Centre Study (2003) looked at the current state of the town centre. The report confirms much of the earlier yellow book analysis, noting that:

- there is very little market interest in vacant units
- the retail offer is poor
- there are many derelict buildings and gap sites
- residents are apprehensive about visiting the town centre out of shopping hours.

A key question for the Hillier Parker study was whether the pedestrianisation of Main Street had contributed to the decline of Main Street. The consultants concluded that this is not the core issue, but that action was required on three fronts:

- better day-to-day management of the town centre
- introduction of non-retail uses to generate footfall and extend hours of activity
- investment in the physical fabric, especially gap sites and derelict buildings.

CONCLUSION

2.31 This short review of the context for the study has shown that:

- there is general concern about the condition of Kilsyth Town Centre (especially the fragile state of retailing, gap sites, derelict buildings and streetscape) and a recognition that action is required to halt the centre’s long-term decline
- earlier studies have confirmed that the fortunes of Kilsyth town centre are at a low ebb, but that its distinctive townscape and architecture mean that Kilsyth has the potential to become an attractive and successful place once again
- the Kelvin Valley is recognised as an important landscape, heritage, environmental and recreational asset, with some tourism potential
- although there is only a short section of the Forth & Clyde Canal in North Lanarkshire, it is an important asset because (a) the character of the canal as it passes through the Kelvin Valley is uniquely rural, and (b) Auchinostarry Basin has been identified as one of the principal activity nodes on the restored canal, and a stopover point for coast-to-coast voyages
- the Scottish Executive has described Scotland’s canals as a key asset with considerable development potential; Ministers expect local authorities and public
sector bodies to work together to capitalise on this opportunity, and especially to realise the potential of the restored Millennium Link

- current statutory plans recognise the potential of the canal to act as a catalyst sustainable development, achieving social, economic and environmental objectives, but the nature and quality of development must take account of its status as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the green belt designation of the canal corridor
- other studies have identified the development potential of parts of the study area, including proposals for town centre streetscape improvements and proposals to improve access and to upgrade the facilities at Colzium House.

2.32 We can conclude that the policy context for the present study is generally supportive, but we should also note that the anticipated economic benefits of the canal in North Lanarkshire are modest. It seems clear that action to implement the current proposals for Auchinstarry must form part of a bigger package of mutually supportive measures in the wider study area.

2.33 The key objectives set out in the Local Plan have played a key role in the present study. Our consultations – with both the public sector partners and the community – show that the issues raised remain relevant, and constitute the natural agenda for the action plan.
This section of the report summarises some of the principal findings of the consultant team’s survey of the Kelvin Valley area. The audit covers:

- a description of the study area
- socio-economic conditions
- the Kelvin Valley and the Forth & Clyde Canal
- tourism, leisure and recreation
- townscape and architecture of Kilsyth
- landscape, scenery and heritage
- natural environment
- community resources
- current and planned developments

**DESCRIPTION**

3.2 Within the context of the Central Belt, Kilsyth and Croy are often perceived to be relatively isolated communities, standing apart from the greater Glasgow conurbation and the M8 and M80 road corridors. The two communities (and the wider study area) have a distinctive identity and a secluded location in the Kelvin valley. (Fig 3.1)

3.3 However, the area may be different but it is by no means remote. Kilsyth is only 4 miles from junction 4 of the M80, and is easily accessible by road to Glasgow, Stirling, Falkirk and
Edinburgh. Croy station is on the Glasgow-Edinburgh main line and has an improved half-hourly shuttle service, as well as regular trains to other destinations. (Fig 3.2)

3.4 The study area lies in the upper Kelvin Valley, with the Kilsyth hills forming a backdrop to the north and a ridge capped by the Antonine Wall to the south. The landscape is pleasantly varied and there is a distinctly rural feel which contrasts with nearby built-up areas of the Central Belt.

3.5 The Kelvin Valley has historically provided a convenient corridor for east-west movement and the A803, which runs along the valley, is still the main link between Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch in the west and Falkirk in the east. The A803, the Forth and Clyde canal, the Antonine Wall and the Edinburgh to Glasgow rail line all contribute to the dominant east-west alignment, with few north-south links across the valley. There are, for example, only three crossings of the river and canal in a 10km stretch. (Fig 3.3)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

3.6 Returns from the 2001 Census show that the population of Kilsyth was 9,816, with a further 659 people living in Croy. Compared with the Scottish average, Kilsyth has:

- a much smaller proportion of residents born outside Scotland
- a broadly similar age composition
- more overcrowded households
- more households with 4 or more residents
- more people living in flats, maisonettes or terraced houses
- a higher proportion of households in Council owned properties
- a higher proportion of lone parents with dependent children
- more households with no car – although a higher proportion of employees travel to work by car
- a higher percentage of residents who are economically inactive and sick/disabled
- a lower proportion of people in good health
- fewer self-employed people
- fewer students
- a higher proportion of full-time workers
- more residents employed in manufacturing and construction (including out-commuters)
- fewer people in managerial or professional occupations
- less long-term unemployment
- more people with no educational qualifications or none above SVQ level 3.
3.7 These figures are subject to a margin of error, but they clearly indicate a community which:

- is failing to attract new migrants
- has a high proportion of people living in Council housing, some in poor conditions
- has above-average hidden unemployment
- ...and a higher incidence of illness and disability
- has a poorly qualified workforce, with a high proportion working in un/semi-skilled and manual occupations, often in declining industries.

3.8 The Kilsyth Local Plan (1999) recorded the effects of a long-term decline in traditional industries, and noted that “Kilsyth is increasingly a dormitory suburb of Glasgow and Cumbernauld, [which] exports much of its labour force to the adjacent communities”. All the evidence suggests that this trend has continued and may even have accelerated.

3.9 As many recent studies/reports have noted, the economy of the town – which is the only significant employment centre in the locality – is very fragile. Although employment data at this level are subject to a considerable margin of error, the evidence on the ground suggests that (among potential sources of local employment):

- the retail market is weak, with a thin representation of multiple stores and a significant proportion of independent local traders serving the bottom end of the market
- commercial activity in the town centre has diminished over time
- there are still a number of manufacturing, distribution and construction businesses located on industrial estates, but employment in these sectors has been in long-term decline
- tourism and leisure provide very low levels of employment.

3.10 The evidence suggests that, in common with many other small towns in the central belt, the future of Kilsyth hangs in the balance. The present social trends imply a significant level of social exclusion, and raise questions about the sustainability of a community which has lost its status as a local employment centre.

**KELVIN VALLEY AND THE FORTH & CLYDE CANAL**

3.11 The Kelvin Valley is a unique landscape and environmental asset in the North Lanarkshire context, and the rural aspect of this stretch of the canal is itself a distinctive feature of an otherwise mostly urban waterway. British Waterways and other partners recognise that this makes the short section of the canal in the study area a particularly attractive location for canal users and other visitors. Within the study area, the
Fig 3.2 Existing Nodes and Communications
canal corridor divides naturally into character zones that are separated by three crossing points. (Fig 3.4)

3.12 West of Auchinstarry (and extending beyond the North Lanarkshire boundary) the quality of the canal environment is affected by the proximity of the B8023 and views to various unattractive commercial and industrial uses including recycling and tipping. This zone is the least attractive stretch of the canal considered here.

3.13 The improved road at Auchinstarry has alleviated the nuisance created by traffic for local residents, but the new road alignment – and the accompanying paraphernalia of kerbs, barriers and lamp standards - is an uncomfortable urban intervention in an otherwise rural landscape.

3.14 The stretch of canal between Auchinstarry and Craigmarloch is appealing and surprisingly secluded. The combination of mature woodland, 'natural' wetland vegetation and views to farmland provides a pleasing and memorable experience.

3.15 The car park at Craigmarloch is comparatively well used but the surrounding environment has a tired appearance, with outdated landscape design treatments needing to be improved. The remains of the Georgian stable block lying to the north and the adjacent lade feeding into the canal are interesting and authentic features that could be further developed to enhance the character of this area.
3.16 East of Craigmarloch, the Dullatur Marsh signals a change in the character of the canal corridor. Wetland grasses and scrub species have colonised the widened canal basin to create an atmosphere that distinguishes it from adjoining areas. Overhead power lines are a discordant feature of this scene, but further east the rolling landscape and blocks of woodland create a peaceful, attractive environment.

3.17 Locks, bridges and an attractive cluster of historic buildings at Wyndford create an interesting node on the canal that is further enhanced by being a popular location for fishermen.

**Town centre-canal links**

3.18 The canal is approximately 1km from the centre of Kilsyth. Historically, stone from local quarries was loaded onto barges on the canal at Kilsyth, but today there is no direct connection between the canal and the town. The B8023 climbs the hill from Auchinstarry to Kilsyth, but there are no visual clues to connect the two or to encourage canal users to visit Kilsyth (or vice versa). This creates a psychological obstacle that is compounded by the experience of a busy, steep, winding road and the unattractive approaches to the town centre.

3.19 Topographically, town and canal are separated by features such as the ridge at Auchinstarry Quarry, and a zone of farmland and wetland (much of it now designated as a SINC) lie between the two.

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**TOURISM, LEISURE AND RECREATION**

3.20 The restoration of the Forth and Clyde Canal has not yet resulted in a significant volume of canal traffic or a discernible increase in visits to the study area. There is an element of “chicken and egg” about a situation in which navigation has been restored, but little else has happened to encourage visits. Investment is required, market demand remains uncertain – although the potential is not in doubt – and the situation calls for innovation and a creative partnership between the public and private sectors.

3.21 Data supplied by BW confirm that in percentage terms (albeit from a very low base) traffic on sections of the canal has increased considerably. Early visitor numbers at the Falkirk Wheel have of course exceeded expectations, but the next challenge will be to spread the benefits to other less favoured (and less well known) locations. In this respect the creation of a development node at Auchinstarry is of critical importance.

3.22 The area has no paid-for visitor attractions, but a range of free attractions such as the Colzium-Lennox estate, Banton Loch and the Antonine Wall draws a modest number of (mostly local) visitors to the area. (Fig 3.5)

3.23 Effectively presented, these attractions and the surrounding countryside could add up to an appealing and worthwhile visitor experience, but not one that is likely to draw
Fig 3.4 Canal Character Zones
Leisure uses
- Bird-watching
- Fishing (canal, Banton Loch)
- Walking (long distance and local/dog walking)
- Cycling (canal)
- Rock climbing (Auchinstarry Loch)
- Visiting nature reserve
- Exploring archaeology/heritage sites (Antonine Wall)
- Canal boating
- Canoeing/kayaking (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Kayak Club use the swimming pool, Auchinstarry basin and the canal)
- Sitting in cars, eating lunch (lay-bys, canal car parks, Tak ma doon)

Visitor attractions:
1. Colzium Estate
2. Forth & Clyde Canal
3. Banton Loch
4. Antonine Wall
5. Auchenstarry
6. Roman Fort(5)
7. Town Centre
8. Viewpoint
9. Golf courses
Fig 3.6Potential Nodes and Connections
Fig 3.8 Landscape Setting
Fig 3.9 Environmental Assets: designated areas
significant numbers visitors from beyond the immediate (30-45 minute drive time) catchment area.

3.24 There are numerous recreational opportunities in the Kelvin Valley (boating, cycling, fishing, riding, walking and climbing), but little evidence that these markets – which depend principally on access to major centres of population – are being exploited commercially.

3.25 Although we believe that the local recreational market is the major opportunity, especially in the short-medium term, increases in overnight stays and visitor spend are certainly achievable, especially if the proposed developments at Auchinstarry go ahead. (Fig 3.6)

3.26 We should also note the proposal to create the Kelvin Valley Leisure Park at Craigmarloch. This plan, which is described in more detail below, would create a holiday village with accommodation in lodges and static caravans.

KILSYTH: TOWNSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE

3.27 The name Kilsyth was derived from ‘Kelvesyth’ which means land watered by the River Kelvin. Two burns, the Garrell Burn and Ebroch Burn pass through the town centre as they flow from the Campsie Hills down to the River Kelvin. The burns and the associated network of bridges, paths and open spaces are among the town’s most distinctive features.
3.28 The core of the town centre around Main Street, Market Square and Burngreen is organic and intricate, having developed incrementally over several centuries from its original medieval form. Main Street and Market Square form the heart of the commercial centre with various pedestrian wynds and closes providing access to residences above the shops and access to car parking areas to the rear.

3.29 These streets – lined with a range of mostly 19th century buildings - are at the heart of the conservation area, but Main Street in particular is in a sadly diminished state, with derelict buildings, poor quality modern infill and several gap sites.

3.30 Main Street was pedestrianised in the 1980s but substandard patching and repairs have compromised the original paving scheme. These have left the street in a poor condition, with an air of neglect and lifelessness. By comparison Market Street is in much better heart, thanks in part to a successful streetscape scheme and sensitive housing development. Burngreen, with its Victorian bandstand (also restored) is a delightful green oasis, overlooked by good vernacular houses and ringed by the two burns.

3.31 The town has two of Scotland’s most important 20th century buildings. Basil Spence’s Kilsyth Academy is a striking landmark overlooking the town from the north. St Patrick’s Church by Gillespie Kidd and Coia is on the fringes of the town.
centre and is an outstanding 1970s building that has recently been restored. The town centre also has a number of listed buildings including the White House – a former 19th public house which was closed by the Temperance Movement and subsequently used as a drapers shop. It is now owned by Strathclyde Building Preservation Trust, and is awaiting new uses.

3.32 The town centre has undoubted appeal and potential, despite its run-down state. However, access to this traditional core is compromised by poor signposting, drab surface car parks and the barriers created by over-engineered roads.

3.33 The result is that the town centre is unwelcoming and impenetrable. There are few visual cues to encourage drivers to stop or enter the central area, and access routes from major roads to the town centre are confusing. Beyond the immediate town centre fringe the principal routes to and through the town are characterised by unattractive public sector housing schemes and poor quality industrial sites. (Fig 3.7)

LANDSCAPE, SCENERY AND HERITAGE

3.34 The character of the landscape varies across the section of the valley and in relation to variations in topography and hydrology. To the north, the Kilsyth Hills are topped by open, heather-clad moorland but this gives way on the lower slopes to a geometric matrix of farmed land, overlain by a network of walls, hedges and trees. The broad and level valley floor below combines farmland and 'natural' wetland scattered with patches of mixed woodland and regenerating scrub. To the south, the steep slopes that rise up to the Antonine Wall are densely covered with rich, mixed, mature deciduous woodland. (Fig 3.8)

3.35 The most attractive features of the landscape include:
- the well-kept canalside environment
- attractive mature deciduous woodland on adjacent slopes
- interesting complexes of streams and water bodies
- secluded 'wild' areas
- Auchinstarry Loch quarry face
- scenic views

3.36 Historic and existing industrial activity have had a widespread impact on the landscape. Views to lush and attractive landscapes are often undermined by industrial works with rusting structures, incongruous materials used for boundary treatments, eroded road edges, collapsing stone dykes and an extensive overhead wirescape. There are also frequent occurrences of litter and flytipping that mar otherwise attractive rural scenes.
3.37 Croy sits on the obverse side of the hill from the Kelvin Valley and consequently feels rather separate from the rest of the study area. Kilsyth is located on the lower, south-facing slopes of the valley, set into a bowl-shaped landform behind a ridge of rock, now hollowed out as Auchinstarry Quarry. The parts of Kilsyth that lie on higher ground are visible from over a wide area; unfortunately however, those areas - public sector housing to the north and houses that line the exposed southern ridge - give a rather poor impression, giving neither a clear sense of character or an impression of quality.

3.38 On the positive side however, other visible features do look attractive and give Kilsyth a distinctive appearance, including the massive open rock face at Auchinstarry, the tree cover and lochs and streams around and through the settlement, and a number of interesting, eye-catching landmark steeples and towers.

3.39 The high ground around the study area gives many opportunities for long views across and along the valley. The main road and rail corridors give excellent views and there are several special viewpoint locations in the area that give long views, even as far as Glasgow and Edinburgh. These include the Tak ma Doon viewpoint to the north and the hill forts on the Antonine Wall.

3.40 The study area also includes important historic sites in addition to those described above. These include one of
the best preserved sections of the Antonine Wall, and - by contrast – the planned environment of the Colzium-Lennox estate. The latter has been the subject of a separate report, and clearly has considerable potential, despite the municipal feel of the park.

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

3.41 There is a significant range of environmental resources in and around Kilsyth, from the scenic rural landscape to features of interest such as the Antonine Wall and the canal, to designated sites including numerous SINC areas, a Local Nature Reserve at Dumbreck and an SSSI at Dullatur. (Fig 3.9)

3.42 There are many organisations working in the area, trying to protect and develop this resource. The various organisations liaise regularly and have successfully acted in partnership in the past to take initiatives forward (although on a relatively small scale). There is currently an emphasis on improving access through the introduction of new signage and path improvements. However, the approach is essentially opportunistic and there is no evidence of shared vision or common strategy.

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

3.43 From the consultants’ perspective, one of the outstanding
features of the study area is the evident strength of Community Councils and other organisations in Kilsyth, Croy and the surrounding villages.

3.44 Kilsyth Community Council’s website [www.kilsyth.co.uk](http://www.kilsyth.co.uk) is one of the best of its type that we have seen, offering an encouraging insight into a concerned, aware and active community. The Community Council has been the driving force behind the successful launch of the town’s Farmer’s Market, and is also a supporter of the Kilsyth International Carnival Society (KICS) which held its first carnival in Colzium Park in August 2003.

3.45 Kilsyth Community Council has played an active role in campaigning for broadband services in Kilsyth, canal regeneration, access for ramblers, town centre regeneration and other major issues for the community.

3.46 Our own experience includes a successful and well attended community workshop during the second stage of this study. Community Councillors, business owners, environmental campaigners and others attended this event. The Community Councils of Croy, Banton and Queenzieburn were also well represented.

3.47 The presence of a substantial number of energetic, skilled and effective community activists is a major opportunity. It is not a substitute for public sector services and/or private sector investment, but it is a valuable antidote to the culture of dependency in some west of Scotland communities. It should provide the basis for an effective partnership between the community and the public and private sectors.

**CURRENT AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS**

3.48 We have not attempted a comprehensive review of current and planned developments in the study area, but some plans/proposals should be highlighted. (Fig 3.10)

**Kilsyth Town Centre**

3.49 NLC has approved a three-year programme for the full pedestrianisation and upgrading of Main Street at an estimated cost of £3.5m. The first phase is due to commence in June 2004. All traffic will be excluded from a clearly defined pedestrian area, with the exception of service vehicles and disabled drivers.

3.50 Plans are also in place (subject to approval) for the redevelopment of the key White House building (38-48 Main Street) as a community service facility, offering customer information points and internet access. The estimated cost of the works is £680,000.
We noted in Section 2 that British Waterways have identified Auchinstarry Basin as one of the key development nodes on the newly restored Millennium Link. Plans are well advanced for developments including:

- additional moorings
- improved services/amenities for overnight visitors
- canalside site for long-term boat storage
- jetty for barge trips.

In addition, BW have secured outline planning consent for the development of a small hotel and canalside inn at Auchinstarry. These developments will help to establish Auchinstarry as one of the principal stopover points for coast-to-coast canal traffic. As such it will:

- contribute to the development of traffic on the Millennium Link system, by providing essential facilities – and leisure amenities – for users, and
- it will maximise the economic benefits of the canal in the study area by creating a magnet for visitors.

We have been supplied (by the applicant) with a prospectus of the proposed Kelvin Valley Leisure Park (KVLP) at Craigmarloch, and we have also been given sight of the supporting market research. KVLP aims to “complement and enhance existing facilities and attractions”. The key elements of the proposal include:

- restoration of Craigmarloch Stables as visitor centre, bar and restaurant
- creation of a holiday village at Craigmarloch, comprising lodges, static caravans, sites for mobile caravans and a camp site
- promotion of existing leisure/outdoor facilities
- new attractions including a sports complex, outdoor centre and off-road facility.

We understand that the applicant has secured outline planning consent for the holiday village, but that approval was subject to a number of requirements relating to access.

The Colzium-Lennox Estate is perhaps the most significant existing visitor destination in the area. It has a distinctive collection of listed historic buildings and mature estate grounds and gardens that provide an attractive contrast to the farmland and ‘natural’ environments in the surrounding area.
described their vision for Colzium as “...a high quality visitor attraction harnessing the Estate’s unique heritage and sense of place in a way that fully utilises the potential of the house for conferences, meetings, and weddings and the grounds for quiet, casual enjoyment in a way that enhances opportunities for community use and events whilst developing the Estate as the focal point for tourism and wider public enjoyment of the Kelvin Valley.”

3.57 The report recommended that Colzium should become a ‘hub’ of recreational and tourist activity and a gateway for exploration of the wider area. It also recommended improving links between the estate and the canal, combined with improved access to and around Banton Loch.

Waterfall Village

3.58 This housing development by Park Circus Homes has been highlighted because it marks an important step change for Kilsyth, with the introduction of 190 new “luxury” homes. The form of the development, in a former quarry next to the A803 east of the town centre, promises to be radical and features a man-made waterfall that will operate between 7am and 11pm daily.

3.59 This is an important project which will significantly extend housing choice in the study area, and help to attract and retain residents on higher incomes.

New walking routes

3.60 In their report, *Access in the Kelvin Valley* (2002) the consultants Halcrow Fox carried out a review of footpaths throughout the Kelvin Valley area and an assessment of the potential for the creation of a comprehensive footpath network through the construction of new routes and improvements to signage.

3.61 Following consultations with the community and stakeholders, a shortlist of priority projects was identified:

- area-wide signposting
- circular footpath linking Banton and Colzium House
- circular Walk around Banton Loch
- footpath from Queenzieburn to Dumbreck Marsh Nature Reserve
- Croy to Twechar route (via Barr Hill)
- survey of local paths in the Kelvin Valley
- circular walk around Kilsyth: the Round Town Route

3.62 The Round Town Route is actively supported by other agencies operating in the area and improvements to paths and signage are already under way.

Dumbreck public art project

3.63 North Lanarkshire Council is working in conjunction with Community Councils and local communities to develop an arts project centred on the Dumbreck Nature Reserve.

3.64 A funding package is currently being assembled for a contemporary web-based and physical art project that explores the history and evolution of the nature reserve, with an emphasis on community education and engagement.

Croy Station

3.65 Work is currently under way to extend the car park at Croy
station. This will provide for the growing number of park and ride commuters attracted by improved rail services at Croy, and address the problems and disruption caused by informal overflow parking.

CSFT initiatives

3.66 The Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) is carrying out an ongoing programme of tree planting in the central belt, to expand the area of native woodland, heal environments damaged by industry the legacy of industry, improve amenity and enhance natural habitats.

3.67 CSFT are implementing two projects in the study area:
- waymarking for the Round Town Route (anticipated completion: summer 2003)
- Kilsyth Hills Forest Habitat: a series of woodland planting schemes at Gavell Burn, Wester Auchinrivoch (both completed), Auchinrivoch or Burnhead Farm (planned).

OVERVIEW: THE KELVIN VALLEY SWOT

3.68 The audit of the study area provides the basis for the following SWOT analysis:

**STRENGTHS**
- Rural setting
- Landscape and scenery
- Facilities at Auchinstarry
- Architecture and townscape
- History and heritage
- Proximity to major centres of population
- Good road and rail links

**WEAKNESSES**
- Under-used land
- Litter and fly tipping
- Declining employment base
- Fragile town centre
- Retail offer very poor
- Many derelict buildings/vacant sites
- Unsustainable demographic mix

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Completion of Millennium Link
- Active community groups
- Speciality shops, quality food and drink
- Critical mass of attractions and activities
- Growing recreation/sports/experience markets
- Recent studies on Colzium/access
- Planned broadband investment
- Developer interest in KVLP

**THREATS**
- Slow build-up of Millennium Link traffic
- Continuing population/employment decline
- Intensifying competition from other retail locations
- Property market failure
- Cycle of low expectations and achievement
- Weak links between canal and town
- Limited development capacity in Green Belt
- Inappropriate forms of development
PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

3.69 Two key messages from the research phase are that:
- linkages between the canal, Kilsyth town centre and the rest of the study area are generally weak, and
- the economic development potential of the canal in North Lanarkshire is modest, and the benefits will flow through quite slowly.

3.70 The original brief was predicated on the assumption that the Millennium Link (and especially development at Auchinstarry) would be the catalyst for regeneration in Kilsyth town centre. However, the weak linkages between town and canal mean that commercial development around the latter will not necessarily confer major benefits on the town. In our judgement, it would be a mistake to adopt a strategy that depends too much on canal-related development. Agree – could this be more heavily emphasised in the conclusions. It would help strengthen the action plan approach.

3.71 We favour a more pragmatic and incremental approach, designed to create the conditions for sustainable growth in the study area. Our recommended approach has five key strands:
- direct and urgent intervention to upgrade Kilsyth town centre
- a proactive approach to accelerate planned development at Auchinstarry
- creation of a network of attractions and activities connected by footpaths and bridleways
- piloting innovative approaches in the housing market and community development
- underpinning these measures with new management/delivery structures.

3.72 Because there is no “big bang” solution (such as the Millennium Wheel) in prospect, we believe that the action plan must provide for simultaneous, but complementary, action on several fronts. Taken together these interventions will help to create a sustainable change momentum in the study area.

CONCLUSIONS

3.73 The study area is a place of considerable appeal and potential. The Kelvin Valley is a valuable landscape and ecological resource; the town of Kilsyth has great qualities; and Auchinstarry will be a key location on the restored canal.

3.74 However, for the most part this potential remains untapped. The valley, like other open spaces in the area is an under-utilised (and badly managed) asset; Kilsyth town centre is in a critical condition; and the full benefits of the canal are still some years ahead.

3.75 As a result, the communities of the Kelvin Valley are facing a crisis resulting from population and employment decline, and a loss of confidence and self esteem. We have shown the evidence of social and economic exclusion in the community, and the failure of the traditional centres to attract new residents. In section 4 we map out a vision and strategy for change.
Based on the preceding analysis, the consultant team has developed the following vision statement, objectives and priorities. They have evolved during the course of stage 2 of the study, taking account of client feedback and the views of the community consultation.

**THE VISION**

Over the next 10 years the Kelvin Valley will become a special and distinctive place to live, work and visit:

- Kilsyth town centre will be the lively and attractive heart of the community
- the area will be established as an outstanding leisure and recreation resource, an outdoor playground for urban central Scotland
- the Kelvin Valley will be a popular and sought-after place to live, and will be experiencing steady population growth
- it will be a model for sustainable development and innovation.

**FOUR KEY OBJECTIVES**

In moving towards this vision, NLC, SEL and their partners should focus on four 5 year objectives:

- reinventing and regenerating Kilsyth town centre
- maximising the economic and amenity value of the Forth & Clyde canal
- creating a network of attractions, activities and access routes
- attracting and retaining higher-income residents to create a better balanced community.

**PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

Our recommended priorities for action under each of these objectives are summarised in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal-related</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network of attractions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting residents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Kilsyth Town Centre Initiative
- Auchinstarry project
- Kelvin Valley Park
- Housing innovation
- Kelvin Valley Community Fund
- Management and promotion

- attracting visitors and improving the quality of life for residents
- promoting housing innovation will contribute directly to the objective of attracting and retaining high earners, and it will also boost the town centre economy by increasing disposable income
- the community fund will facilitate and part-fund a programme of community-led initiatives, designed to improve quality of life and promote confidence and self-esteem
implementing a programme of management measures and promotional activities will help to ensure the success of the townscape initiative, encourage visitors and make the area more attractive to residents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.6 These measures have emerged from the study process. They address the key challenges identified in Section 3, and they also reflect the following guiding principles for action:

• enhancing the distinctive qualities of Kilsyth and the Kelvin Valley
• achieving quality development – in terms of architectural, design and architectural standards – that will deliver a change for the better in the study area
• offering an internally consistent balanced package of capital programmes, management measures and policy instruments
• focusing on a small number of priority initiatives
• encouraging community ownership
• planning for effective delivery, and
• in these ways, seeking to achieve sustainable development of the economy, the environment and the community.

4.7 Section 5 describes the action plan in more detail.
5.1 Based on the priorities and principles set out in Section 4 above, we have developed a medium-term (5 year) Kelvin Valley Action Plan (KVAP). The measures outlined here do not form an exhaustive list, but they represent a realistic, affordable and relevant programme for action, and will make a positive difference to the people of the Kelvin Valley communities.

AN OUTLINE PROGRAMME

5.2 This is an outline programme that will require further development and appraisal. We recommend a phased approach to implementation, based on the following timetable:

- end December 2003: in-principle approval by NLC and SEL
- January – June 2004: project development and appraisal
- June 2004: business plan and funding package approved
- September 2004 – August 2008: project delivery (with interim evaluation in 2006).

5.3 The outline package comprises the 6 measures detailed below.

KILSYTH TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVE

5.4 The Kilsyth Town Centre Initiative (KTCI) will be a comprehensive, phased environmental scheme, focused on the conservation area and the town centre fringes. The improvements already planned for Main Street (see para 3.49) will form the first phase of this programme. (Fig 5.1)

5.5 This programme will account for the majority of capital expenditure in the KVAP, but it should not be a stand-alone initiative. Enhancing the town centre environment is an essential pre-condition for the regeneration of Kilsyth, but it will only succeed if it is accompanied by business development, management, promotional and other measures including those outlined below. (Fig 5.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 1: Kilsyth Town Centre Initiative (KTCI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Restoration and re-use of derelict properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Quality infill of derelict sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. High quality street surfaces and furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improving the visibility and accessibility of the town centre, and creating a point of entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Creating public space for markets and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Capitalising on the burns and Burngreen Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A phased programme of works throughout the conservation area, with a particular emphasis on Main Street. A detailed design and full costings will be required, but the emphasis should be on architectural and design quality, using high quality, durable materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programme</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1: commission detailed design and specification; secure funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 2-3: Phase 1 – Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 4-5: Phase 2 – Burns/town centre fringes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget (est)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to £2 million public sector contribution attracting matched funding from private sector, ERDF and other sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partners</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead partners: NLC, SEL, ERDF, THI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig 5.1  Kilsyth Town Centre: entrance options
Fig 5.2  Kelvin Valley Park: concept
AUCHINSTARRY PROJECT

5.6 The aim of the Auchinstarry Project is to secure the early delivery of quality canal-side development at this key location. In particular, the public sector partners should seek to ensure that planned amenity improvements are complemented by appropriate, private sector led commercial leisure development.

Priority 2: Auchinstarry Project

Objectives
1. Establish Auchinstarry as the principal stopover point for coast-to-coast canal traffic.
2. Establish Auchinstarry as popular short-stay/weekend break location.
3. Create a diverse, high quality outdoor leisure/recreation offer.

Description
Through a combination of (a) policy measures, (b) grant funding, (c) gap funding, and (d) joint ventures, accelerate the development of a cluster of canal-related/outdoor activities. In addition to the core amenities planned by BW, the Auchinstarry offer should include a quality small hotel, an inn/restaurant; boat trips; boat and cycle hire; a climbing centre; an outdoor education centre; visitor information and interpretation.

Programme
Year 1: Push forward funding and delivery of core amenities; prepare development prospectus and market business/investment opportunities. Commission masterplan and secure funding.
Year 2: Complete core amenities; identify hotel/inn developer/operator; sign up cycle hire etc operators.
Years 3-5: New Commercial Enterprises open for business.

Budget (est)
Up to £250,000 public sector contribution, with opportunities for clawback in years 4+.

Partners
British Waterways, SEL, NL&CRF, ERDF; private sector developers and operators.
**KELVIN VALLEY PARK**

5.7 The proposed Kelvin Valley Park will provide an overarching spatial and managerial framework for countryside and green spaces in the study area. This concept could be extended beyond the study area boundary, for example, to include the Kilsyth Hills. We are conscious of the policy implications, and of discussions about a possible park in the Carron Valley – Campsie area.

### Priority 3: Kelvin Valley Park

| Objectives | 1. Create a network of attractions and outdoor amenities in the Kelvin Valley  
2. Complete access network (footpaths and cycle-paths) to link attractions  
3. Increase level of day visits and overnight stays, and maximise visitor spend. |
|---|---|
| Description | Over a 5-year programme, complete key projects in the study area, including enhancement of Colzium House/Colzium-Lennox estate; improved signage and interpretation of the Antonine Wall; public art projects; CSFT planting schemes; observation hides/interpretation at Dullatur Marsh; access to Banton Loch.  
Concurrently, complete footpath/cyclepath network based on the Round Town route, but extended to include sites in the wider study area. The regenerated town centre should be integral to the network.  
Establish KVP brand; create appropriate management structure, and establish service level agreements with key partners/funding bodies. |
| Programme | Year 1: complete design of key projects and secure funding; commence negotiations with partners on creation of KVP management company  
Year 2: form KVP Co and launch brand; complete access network  
Years 3-4: complete key projects |
| Budget (est) | Public sector capital contribution: £1 million (exc Colzium House – subject of a separate report/proposal  
Annual revenue budget: £150k |
| Partners | NLC, SEL, SNH, Historic Scotland, Community Councils, CSFT. |
Attracting new residents to the study area, especially from higher income groups will make an important contribution to the goal of sustainable community. This measure calls for a pro-active stance by the local authority to promote a wider range of housing choice, especially for owner-occupiers, carried out within the Development Plan Policy Framework. Again we acknowledge the policy implications of this proposal, and the need for planning tools such as design/development briefs to ensure sustainable, high quality development is achieved.

### Priority 4: Housing Innovation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To attract new residents to Kilsyth and Croy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To increase the level of disposable income in the retail catchment area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To establish the area as a distinctive and sought-after place to live.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This would be a **policy initiative**, based on active engagement with housebuilders and developers. NLC would commission consultants to identify site-specific opportunities to (a) diversify and (b) raise the quality threshold for housing in Kilsyth and Croy. The study should consider opportunities for both high density/urban village developments in the urban centres, and potential to create micro-settlements by the canal (for example, at Wyndford). The consultants should consider the market for eco-housing. The Council will need to consider the policy implications of the consultants’ recommendations – and could then issue a prospectus as a basis for discussions with interested parties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1: consultancy/policy review/issue prospectus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget (est)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£50,000</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private sector, Housing Association</td>
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</table>
The aim of this strand of the programme is to facilitate and provide seedcorn/development funding for a programme of community-led initiatives. There would be a key role for the Community Councils and the proposed Kelvin Valley Initiatives Group. Funding will be provided from the proposed Key Fund.

### Priority 5: Kelvin Valley Community Fund

**Objectives**

1. To mobilise the energy, commitment and ideas of the Kelvin Valley communities
2. To create learning opportunities for local residents
3. To undertake research and development
4. To promote a sustainable community

**Description**

A Key Fund will be established to finance the development and delivery of small community led projects. These might include: creation of neighbourhood open spaces/community gardens, play parks, recycling projects, a programme of events and activities, community planning events etc.

We envisage the creation of the Kelvin Valley Initiatives Group: its board (comprising representatives of Community Councils, amenity groups and others) will establish project selection criteria and consider applications. The Key Fund should pay for a full time animateur, whose role will also include town centre management, events and promotions (see below).

**Programme**

- Year 1: establish key fund; form KIG; appoint animator; establish first year programme
- Year 2: launch fund
- Year 3: evaluate progress

**Budget (est)**

£150k per annum, including staff costs

**Partners**

NLC, ERDF, Lottery Community Fund, private sponsors
MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

5.10 The measures outlined above need to be underpinned by an appropriate policy framework – and complemented by an active programme of management measures and promotion. Detailed design work is required to explore the fit between the proposed Kelvin Valley Park, the Kelvin Valley Initiatives Group, the Community Fund and the measures outlined below:

**Priority 6: Policy, management and promotion**

**Objectives**

1. To create a year-round programme of events and activities in Kilsyth and the other Kelvin Valley settlements and amenities
2. To ensure that Kilsyth fulfils its potential as a successful local shopping centre, and develops a role as a speciality retail/leisure destination
3. To secure the active involvement of the private sector and the wider community.

**Description**

The duties of the animateur (see priority 5 above) should include a town centre manager (TCM) role. She/he will need to build close links with retailers and other town centre businesses, the Council and other agencies. The TCM must ensure that all the partners are pulling in the same direction; she/he will also develop a programme of events and promotional activities, designed to attract locals and visitors to the town throughout the year, and beyond normal shopping times.

**Programme**

Year 1: appoint TCM, develop programme and launch
Year 3: evaluate progress

**Budget (est)**

£50k + staff costs (see above)

**Partners**

Requirement for management measures
WHAT WILL IT COST?

5.11 We estimate that the cost of this programme to the public sector will be in the order of £5 million over five years. Expenditure will ramp up from around £0.5 million in year 1, to £1.1-1.2 million in years 2-4, when the major capital works will be undertaken.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated budget (£k)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Y1</td>
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<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KTCI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auchinstarry project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvin Valley Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management + promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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FUNDING AND DELIVERY

5.12 This programme does not require £5 million of “new money”. The partners are already planning expenditure in Kilsyth Town Centre, at Auchinstarry and Colzium House. Elements of the programme may be eligible for ERDF funding, and we can advise on the development of an application if required. NLC already has experience of setting up and operating a key fund, as recommended under priority 5.

5.13 We have recommended the creation of the KVIG to supervise the proposed Community Fund. Forming the group will give the community a direct stake in the regeneration process, including town centre management, marketing and promotion. The animateur/town centre manager will be responsible to the Group.

5.14 We have made a number of recommendations on administrative arrangements and – as we have indicated – further work will be required to explore the proposal to create the Kelvin Valley Park, especially in the light of existing proposals for a regional park for the Campsies.

NEXT STEPS

5.15 We recommend that the clients should approve the package set out in this report in principle, subject to (a) detailed design and development, and (b) the availability of resources.

5.16 Following in principle approval, we recommend that the clients should:
- publish an executive summary of the proposals, as a basis for consultation with partners and the community (by end 2003)
- start work on an early action programme (see below)
Early Action Programme

1. Commission masterplan and townscape design for KTCI; agree costed, phased work programme
2. Finalise funding for core programme at Auchinstarry Basin and let engineering/construction contracts
3. Secure funding and agree programme for Colzium House proposals
4. Complete design for extended access network and agree costed work programme
5. Commission housing study
6. Establish key fund and form Kelvin Valley Initiatives Group
7. Appoint animateur/town centre manager

- develop a detailed work programme with revised costings (end March 2004)
- secure approvals and assemble a funding package for a 4-5 year programme (end June 2004)
- formally launch the KVAP (September 2004)

CONCLUSION

5.17 This report has set out a long term vision for the Kelvin Valley. In 10 years time the Kelvin Valley will be recognised as a special and distinctive place to live, work and visit:

- Kilsyth town centre will be the lively and attractive heart of the community
- the area will be established as an outstanding leisure and recreation resource, an outdoor playground for urban central Scotland
- the Kelvin Valley will be a popular and sought-after place to live, and will be experiencing steady population growth
- it will be a model for sustainable development and innovation.

5.18 The programme outlined above sets out a series of practical actions for the next five years, which – taken together – will achieve a substantial and sustainable change in the fortunes of Kilsyth and the Kelvin Valley communities, and set them on the way towards achieving the vision.

5.19 The programme should be seen as an integrated package, combining conventional (but essential) townscape enhancements, with joint ventures, community initiatives, policy innovation and management measures. It combines top-down measures with a strong emphasising on enabling and empowering an already skilled and committed community sector.

yellow book
September 2003