



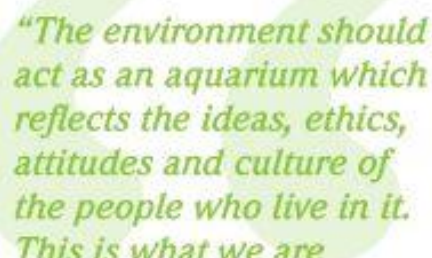
Strauss Park
“a multifunctional park for everyone”

This report was created to generate discussion amongst local residents in about the best use of Strauss Park, on the outskirts of the area.

The history of this area of land stretches from housing a piggery and orchard to maintained football pitches and changing block in the 1970s, but became a area of neglect by a series of West Dunbartonshire administrations.

The area now stands as an area of opportunity for the residents of Linnvale, but this will only be achieved if those residents are at the heart of any decision making.

Save Linnvale Green Space generated this report to begin that discussion and to contribute to any fundraising actions.



“The environment should act as an aquarium which reflects the ideas, ethics, attitudes and culture of the people who live in it. This is what we are working towards.”

Loris Malaguzzi

Background

Save Linnvale Green Space (SLGS) was established when the West Dunbartonshire Local Planning Committee re-assigned Strauss Park in Linnvale to residential status (22nd May 2019). This would have allowed up to 120 houses to be built on the park area, and was despite over 400 concerns being raised by local residents and other interested parties. These concerns included;

- The impact of losing the open space on children and the community.
- The capacity of Linnvale Primary school to accommodate the additional families living in any developed area.
- Road congestion and increased parking in Linnvale area due to new families using Linnvale Primary School. Concerns were also raised in relation to child safety with the increase in traffic.
- The loss of learning activities for the Primary School who regularly use the Open Space area.
- It was also highlighted the area could be used for additional plant life to counteract effects of pollution from A82.
- The loss of a general recreation space that can be used for a variety of activity, recognised as beneficial for health and wellbeing.
- It was also raised that the site could be used be improved for community improvements in the form of growing areas, improved walking opportunities and sports activity.

“ ... green infrastructure on a par with transport, water, waste and energy as the critical infrastructure for successful placemaking”.

West Dunbartonshire Our Green Network Supplementary Guidance

SLGS was created to amplify the voices of residents who raised concerns about a variety of issues, including a potential increase of road traffic in an already congested residential area; the loss of a significant piece of greenspace, arguably at a time of environmental crisis; lack of adequate resources to support population increase in the area, i.e. schooling; and the loss of an educational resources for the Primary school. It is also recognised that there is a scarcity of green space in Clydebank, and therefore for the loss of this space is significant not only for the immediate area.

Despite these concerns being raised, there was little engagement with the community by elected representation. Councillor John Mooney and Councillor Lawrence O’Neill were the only active elected representatives, who had engaged with the community and updated them on the situation.

On 19th August 2020, the Local Planning 2 Committee accepted the recommendations of the Scottish Reporter to remove Strauss Park from the plan and return it’s Open Space status. The securing of this status for Strauss Park means there is now no longer a requirement for the campaign group SLGS. The winding down of the group will allow residents to focus their energy on the development of the park, **which is essential if future threats to the park are to be avoided.**

SLGS recognises the role of Linnvale and Drumry Community Council (LDCC) as a voice of both these communities. West Dunbartonshire Council funds the Community Councils to “bring local people together to help make things happen. They are run by people in your neighbourhood and ensure that local concerns and issues are reported back to your local authority and other relevant public authorities.” LDCC is a constituted group that can apply for money to develop the Strauss Park area. This means LDCC is the ideal vehicle to front the development of the Strauss Park as it is;

- a constituted group
- established in the community
- has links to West Dunbartonshire Council
- has credibility to access further funding for development.

Demography of area

Linnvale is a sprawling area, with a predominantly older population. The area has one primary school, one children’s play park and one local shop. It is also situated between the Forth & Clyde Canal Cycle path, the A82 main road and Clydebank Shopping Centre.

“After housing costs, the highest rates of child poverty are found in Glasgow, Dundee Ayrshire, Inverclyde, Clackmannanshire and West Dunbartonshire.”

Child Poverty; scale, trends and distribution in Scotland

It was challenging, if not impossible to isolate demographic information specific to Linnvale. The closest statistics were available from West Dunbartonshire’s Community Profile for the area covered by Linnvale & Drumry Community Council, the majority of which related to the 2012 census. These statistics show that residents in this area are proportionally older, over 65 years old, than the West Dunbartonshire average, approx. 7% higher. This however does not exclude residents from other social issues. Child poverty is high in the area, with 31% of children living in poverty and 30% of the young people not in education, employment or training. This reflects the statistics of the resident population as a whole with 31% living with income deprivation.

Strauss Park Development survey

A survey was undertaken via Survey Monkey, an online platform to collate information. Approximately 330 people were invited to contribute via email or text. This resulted in 91 returns (28%). Unfortunately 20 contributions were lost due to restrictions on Survey Monkey.

It was considered contacting people door to door in Linnvale, to increase consultation. Due to the current Covid-19 crisis this was not deemed appropriate.

The vast majority of the contributions came from people who lived in Linnvale and therefore have a vested interest in any development.

QUESTION: Do you live in Linnvale?					
Yes	89	No	-	No answer	2

Surprisingly 26% of those who contributed identified as not using the area at all.

QUESTION: Do you use Strauss Park?						
Yes	60	No	24	No answer	7	

This is a concern as it means a large piece of land in Linnvale, a built up area with little resources, is underused by the residents. More investigation into what resources and services would encourage more resident involvement in the area would be welcomed and may ensure the land becomes more vibrant and useful for residents.

Potential Development

There had been a number of potential developments identified by LDCC and at SLGS meetings in the past. These were included in the survey to check that these developments continued to be of interest to residents. A further question allowed contributors to identify any developments that they felt would benefit the community that had not been included.

QUESTION: These are some of the developments for Strauss Park suggested by residents in the past. Please rate each suggestion.						
Suggested Development	Strongly Against	Against	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Children’s Play Park	7 (7.6%)	4 (4.3%)	16 (17.4%)	41 (44.6%)	24 (26%)	92
Dog Training / Walking Area	6 (6.8%)	4 (4.5%)	14 (15.9%)	32 (36.4%)	32 (36.3%)	88
Growing Areas	8 (8.8%)	2 (2.2%)	25 (27.7%)	32 (35.5%)	23 (25.5%)	90
Sports Playing Area	12 (13.4%)	8 (8.9%)	14 (15.7%)	32 (35.9%)	23 (25.8%)	89
Solar Panel Area	18 (21.4%)	7 (8.3%)	40 (47.6%)	13 (15.5%)	6 (7.1%)	84
Cycle Training Area	11 (12.5%)	16 (18.2%)	20 (22.7%)	32 (36.4%)	9 (10.2%)	88
Outdoor Multi Gym	7 (7.9%)	11 (12.5%)	17 (19.3%)	34 (38.6%)	19 (21.6%)	88

Top 3 “Strongly Agreed” with suggestions:

Dog Training / walking area – 36.3%

Children’s play park – 26%

Sports playing area – 25.8%

Top 3 “Agreed” with suggestions

Children’s play park – 44.6%

Outdoor Multigym – 38.6%

Dog Training / walking area – 36.4% / Cycle Training area – 36.4%

The top 3 suggestions most strongly disagreed with were;

Solar Panel area – 21.4%

Sports playing area – 13.4%

Cycle training area – 12.5%

It should be noted that this survey was an attempt to generate resident’s thoughts about the development of the area, to show a need for the development and to begin to generate ideas. The results in no way should be regarded as final recommendations. Any funding secured should include consultation period with residents to establish what development would be best suited to the area.

Residents also contributed their own suggestions for the area.

QUESTION: Do you have any other suggestions for the development of Strauss Park	
Suggestions	Numbers
Outdoor gym and proper dog walking facilities, like a fenced in area for dogs to play off leash safely.	
A multi functional area for the community. A good child play area park. Victoria park is overcrowded. Part walk for dogs and the community walk on outside as it is a large space with nice planting areas to keep interest as well as an open space for dogs. Growing area sectioned off also. Strauss Park can be a multifunctional park for everyone. The space is large and can be enjoyed by everyone. Lots can fit in the expanse of Strauss. I welcome it.	
Provision of adequate numbers of rubbish and go dirt bins.	
Bins at all entry points. Surface work at certain point on the cycle path. Moveable barrier at Duntreath entrance to stop cars coming through and parking on cycle path. Potential for small parking area at Strauss.	
Would like to see more trees.	
Strongly against more housing and roads.	
No housing as there is no access road to accommodate this.	
Tress growing around the Boulevard parameters, and open spaces lighting, walkways, bog and flower gardens, play area for you families. Not enclosed or secluded areas where youngsters cannot gather for drinking or gang fights like it was in the past.	
4g football pitches / basketball court/	
No buildings of any kind.	
Planning for the future now that more families are taking up cycling. It would be beneficial to have an area for cycling and road safety training. Just like Robertson Park had in the past, Strauss Park is situated on the cycle path and nearby train station for commute. Bring your own bike or hire one for a small charge, involve volunteers for bike repair on site also.	
It’s just nice to have some green space around where we live!	
Research area for Linnvale Primary School for Miss Guthrie to use with children for project on wildlife and plants.	
Whatever is put in this it had got to benefit the community.	
Football arena	

Open space / area for kids with maintained open grass for kids to play football / sports. This was the original function of the land before the council cut the budget for maintenance and called it a nature area.	
I'm for ideas that takes into account sustainable and growth economically. I'm against building another children's play park as Linnvale has got park. Outdoot multi gym are rarely used as people have cheap gym memberships. People won't use cycle training area as bikes are intended for longer journeys. Perhaps keep an area of green space for walking / dog walking.	
Community space, well lit and well maintained.	
The grass needs to be cut regularly to make full use of the area available. Areas that are prone to flooding fixed and all heavy duty weeds removed. Also, the perimeter fence needs replacing and possibly have some trees planted to improve the overall look. Also I must stress the importance of not compromising the park, by building lots of facilities that may or may not be used.	
Multi use	

As can be seen many of the suggestions focus on the maintenance of the park. Good lighting and park maintenance, through availability of bins, repairing of fencing and improving the aesthetics were particularly important. This may explain the underuse of the area. Strauss Park was formerly a maintained area with football pitches and changing rooms. The area has been neglected by successive administrations for the past 30 years. This has resulted not only in restricted use of the area, but also intrusive foliage such as Japanese Knotweed.

Funding

There is no doubt that the maintenance of this large area of land has suffered under the lack of priority given to such community resources and allocation of limited funds to other areas of council responsibilities. It is essential that any development of Strauss park can be maintained in the long run, and links to organisations that use such resources for training and employability may provide opportunities to ensure any development has a long term benefit for the community.

Areas of land like Strauss Park, however should not be viewed as a drain on Council resources. The health benefits, both physical and mental, and the opportunity to develop positive community relationships on creative and well planned land, can have huge benefits for Local Authorities.

The benefits of open space are well established, and a variety of national and local policies and strategies focus action in maintaining these sites. Furthermore the wide range of benefits are now recognised and the Fields in Trust highlighted that green spaces can:

- Contribute to a preventative health agenda
- Reduce future Exchequer expenditure
- Reduce health inequalities
- Increase social cohesion and equality."

“Indeed the Marmot Review 2010 recommends that improving the availability of good quality green spaces across the social gradient will help reduce health inequalities.”

For a Local Authority such as West Dunbartonshire, with the level of deprivation experienced by residents, the presence of green space not only provides opportunities to challenge these difficulties, but as an already established area has minimal cost to the Local Authority. Furthermore, if the Local Authority supported the community, additional funding could be secured for the area through grants. Green space also has benefits nationally as identified in the Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces;

“Parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year across the UK based solely on a reduction in GP visits.”

In fact Greenspace Scotland goes so far as to designate greenspaces as “Health Centres without roofs.”

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“...the rate of depression in West Dunbartonshire (82.9 per 1000) is higher than the Scottish Rate (73 per 1000)”

**West Dunbartonshire HSCP
Strategic Needs Assessment
2018**

The benefits are recognised across the Globe with the World Health Organisation recognising that, particularly, urban green spaces have positive health benefits for communities, “including improved mental health, reduced cardiovascular morbidity and mortality, obesity and risk of type 2 diabetes.” (Greenspace Scotland)

If the Local Authority supported the community, additional funding could be secured for the area through grants, increasing income to area. Securing funding with a wide range of aims, rather than focused on the environment, could not only improve this area, but also improve residents future opportunities, e.g. providing learning opportunities for children and additionally young people. Also the development of this land offers opportunities to increase the skills and knowledge of the residents involved in this project, for example links to the Duke of Edinburgh Award for young people involved would give certification to those entering the job market.

The opportunity to generate the Linnvale community's interest in this project would also allow West Dunbartonshire Council to demonstrate their commitment to the Community Council model, would develop the participatory skills of residents, increasing the chance of them engaging with other participatory projects, and would support the Council to fulfil their duties under the Community Empowerment Act, one of the aims of which is to;

“empower community bodies through ownership of land and buildings and through strengthening their voices in the decisions that matter to them”.

The most appropriate funding streams would be identified as the project develops. It would benefit West Dunbartonshire Council to support the initial development of the project, either financially or possibly more appropriately in kind. The allocation of time from a team to consult fully with Linnvale residents about any future development and to support LDCC to identify appropriate funding streams would be beneficial.

“Parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year across the UK based solely on a reduction in GP visits.”

Greenspace

An initial trawl of potential sources of funding includes, (See appendix 1);

- The Bank Foundation
- Climate Community Asset Fund
- Garfield Western Fund
- Greggs Foundation
- The Hedley Foundation
- The National Lottery

A variety of funds could be accessed for various parts of the project, i.e. Employability funding for volunteering opportunities. A fundraising would benefit the project across the period of development as funds could be raised at different points of development, e.g. funding for start up costs and consultation, funding for equipment, funding for ground work.

Finally the development and long term maintenance of land should not be taken lightly. This is a huge, ongoing task which will require staffing, including volunteers, access to equipment and management. A volunteer board outsourcing responsibility for staff and land maintenance would reduce the impact on residents and increase the opportunity of success. Local Third Sector organisations, such as West Dunbartonshire CVS, Y-Sort-It etc could provide vital support and direction to residents.

“An extensive body of evidence demonstrates the benefits they [green spaces] provide in terms of health and wellbeing, safer and stronger communities, active travel and play, economic development and inward investment, as well as a host of environmental services like climate change adaptation, air quality and natural flood management.”

Greenspace Scotland

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Organise meetings with West Dunbartonshire Council key personnel.
- Establish a Strauss Park subgroup of the LDCC.
- Contact West Dunbartonshire CVS.
- Contact Y-Sort-It.
- Organise Strategy Day for subgroup to identify workplan and potential support.
- Identify Fundraising Consultant

**POTENTIAL FUNDERS
STRAUSS PARK**

FUNDER	FOCUS OF FUND	AMOUNT AVAILABLE	CLOSING DATES
<p>Banks Community Fund</p> <p>https://www.banksgroup.co.uk/corporate-responsibility/banks-community-fund</p>	<p>To provide support to community groups, voluntary organisations and environmental projects that are charitable, educational, philanthropic or benevolent in purpose and which are located within close proximity of a current or proposed Banks Group development and provide benefit to the local community.</p>	<p>No Specified</p>	<p>Contact Fund Manager</p>
<p>Community Climate Asset Fund</p> <p>https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/community-climate-asset-fund/</p>	<p>The four key criteria of the CCAF are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Impact - Your assets should reduce greenhouse gas emissions in your community, and help you to raise awareness and understanding of climate change and encourage people in your community to adopt lower carbon ways of living. • Community Benefit - Your assets should provide clear benefits to your 	<p>£1,000 TO £10,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to and including £10,000 do not require match funding. • Between £10,000 and £30,000 you will need to provide 10% of match funding. 	<p>Noon Monday 9th Nov 2020</p>

	<p>community, including those beyond your own organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliverability - Your application should demonstrate that you can complete your project and spend your grant by 31 March 2021. • Maintenance - Your application should demonstrate that you have an appropriate maintenance plan as well as the resources to ensure that this is achievable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For £30,000 and over, you will need to provide 20% match funding. 	
<p>Garfield Western Foundation</p> <p>https://garfieldweston.org/apply-to-us/how-to-apply/</p>	Varied	Unspecified (Up over £100,00)	Contact Funds Manager
<p>Greggs Foundation</p> <p>https://www.greggsfoundation.org.uk/environmental-grant</p>	<p>Funds projects that improve the physical environment in a way that also benefits the wider community. This can include purchase of equipment, sessional salary costs, purchase of trees/plants, small capital projects and learning activities. We are also interested in new approaches and innovative ideas as well as sustainable</p>	Up to £2,000	Ongoing

	<p>approaches to supporting your local environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves the local environment • Ensures involvement of local communities • Delivers a sustainable and measurable difference • Supports people in need 		
<p>The Hedley Foundation</p> <p>http://www.hedleyfoundation.org.uk/</p>	<p>The Trust considers applications relating to young people, their education, recreation, support, training, health and welfare.</p>	<p>Up to £25,000</p>	<p>27/01/21 28/04/21 28/07/21 27/10/21</p>
<p>The National Lottery – Grants for Improving Lives</p> <p>https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/grants-for-improving-lives</p>	<p>We want to fund activity that means people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are better able to identify ways to take control over their lives and build resilience • are able to shape the activities and services they use to better meet their needs • have more access to support and opportunities to improve their lives. 	<p>Varied</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>The Robertson Trust</p> <p>https://www.therobertsontrust.org.uk/</p>	<p>Community Building Grants are aimed at charities helping people and communities in Scotland who are experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) poverty, trauma or both. With this capital funding, they want to support the physical development and/or improvement of buildings that will be used to host or deliver a range of work addressing the impacts of poverty and/or trauma under one or more of the following themes: Financial wellbeing, Emotional wellbeing and relationships, and Educational and work pathways. See website for details of target groups.</p>	<p>Varied</p>	<p>Varied</p>
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