

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Report by Chief Officer – Shared Services Roads & Neighbourhood  
Council: 26 May 2021**

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**Subject: Response to motion to Council – 3 March 2021:  
Kilpatrick Hills**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide a response to the motion approved at the West Dunbartonshire Council meeting held on 3 March 2021 in relation to the use of the Kilpatrick Hills.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** Council is asked to:
- i. note the engagement activity which has taken place to date; and
  - ii. note the measures that have been put in place identified in section 4.4 numbers i-viii.

**3. Background**

- 3.1** Council approved the undernoted motion at its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021;

*This Council is concerned with the ongoing traffic congestion and associated parking issues created by the increase of people seeking access to the Old Kilpatrick Hills.*

*Council recognises that members of the public are choosing to access this area as a means of permitted daily exercise and social activity during these difficult times.*

*Council is not seeking to limit public access to our local hills and countryside but Council seeks to mitigate the effects of the increase in activity, not least the traffic and parking issues created as a result.*

*In particular, Council recognises and is concerned by the particular issues raised by residents of Old Kilpatrick and Hardgate who are greatly inconvenienced by this.*

*Council will consult with Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and the Forestry Commission and thereafter prepare a report to come back to the next meeting of Council exploring all options open to each public body to tackle these issues, and in particular, the report should highlight where each*

*organisation has responsibility and associated powers to take the necessary action to alleviate matters.*

#### **4. Main Issues**

**4.1** The Kilpatrick Hills are located between Dumbarton and Milngavie north of the River Clyde.

**4.2** In recent years there has been growing visitor pressures identified on remote rural communities and wild places throughout Scotland. Visitor numbers have been increasing gradually across all access points to the Kilpatrick Hills, and although it is great to see that more people want to get out to connect with nature and enjoy the outdoors, the rising popularity is presenting challenges to both rural communities and wild places. With the easing of the Covid-19 lockdown in July 2020, visitor numbers have become a major issue, increasing by as much as six fold on some weeks compared to 2019.

**4.3** Officers from the Councils Greenspace Section have had consultative and operational engagement with local communities and partner agencies, including Forestry and Land Scotland, Police Scotland, land owners and WDC Roads Section. During these discussions it has been identified that there has been a noticeable change in the type of visitors accessing the hills, as a growing percentage of visitors are behaving more irresponsibly. The main issues identified are:

- Increased waste and littering
- Inappropriate road-side parking
- Human waste and inappropriate toileting
- Increased traffic and pressure on local roads
- Lack of awareness of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- Negative impacts on the environment
- Disruption to communities, especially from increased traffic and parking
- Anti-social visitor behaviour

**4.4** Further to the motion the following actions have been implemented:

- i. Forestry and Land Scotland has appointed two additional rangers for patrolling over the summer season. The main focus of their area will be the Kilpatrick Hills and positive visitor engagement. They will provide a presence in the hills seven days a week.
- ii. The Council have agreed a contract with Forestry and Land Scotland to provide and service large bins at the entrance to Cochno Hill to deal with the increased levels of littering at this location.
- iii. Council Planning and Greenspace Officers have fast tracked planning permission for a temporary car park at Gavinburn in Old Kilpatrick at

the main access point to the Kilpatrick Hills. This is in line with recent guidance from Scotland's Chief Planning Officer in response to the increased visitor numbers to rural locations throughout Scotland. This has allowed Forestry and Land Scotland to enter into negotiations with the land owner to agree a temporary lease of the site to cover this Summer season. It is anticipated that the car park will be operational from mid May.

- iv. Council Greenspace teams are carrying out additional litter patrols around all of the access points and car parks that service the Kilpatrick Hills.
- v. New signage has been developed and erected at strategic access points advising visitors of the key points of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- vi. Council Roads Officers are progressing a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) that will impose traffic restrictions at the following locations:

A878 Station Road, Old Kilpatrick, from the railway overbridge adjacent to Old Kilpatrick Station to the westbound carriageway of Great Western Road. Restriction on both sides of carriageway for a distance of 460 metres.

A878 Station Road, Old Kilpatrick, from the A82 westbound slip road to the Erskine Bridge slip road to the A82 eastbound carriageway. Restriction on both sides of carriageway for a distance of 505 metres.

Mount Pleasant Drive, Old Kilpatrick, from Station Road to No.22 Mount Pleasant Road. Restriction on both sides of carriageway for a distance of 105 metres.

Cochno Road, Hardgate & Faifley, from Duncombe Avenue to the boundary with East Dunbartonshire Council adjacent to Loansdean access. Restriction on both sides of carriageway for a distance of 2130 metres.

Police Scotland have been consulted on the extent of the temporary restrictions and monitoring will be carried out jointly to shape the development of a permanent traffic regulation order.

- vii. The Roads Service will programme traffic counts and vehicle movements to determine whether traffic calming measures are required. In addition the Service will monitor the operation of the speed messaging board.

- viii. A communications strategy to be developed with partners to encourage responsible use of the Kilpatrick Hills and inform public of measures being implemented.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct people implications resulting from this report.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1 All expenditure resulting from the actions identified in section 4 will be absorbed within existing revenue budgets.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1 Failure to address the issues identified as a result of increased visitor numbers at the Kilpatrick Hills and surrounding access points could lead to reputational damage to the Council and other partner Organisations.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1 An initial screening confirms there is no adverse impact.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1 As detailed in the main issues section of this report engagement has taken place with user groups and other interested parties. This has informed the recommendations made in this paper.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1 This report supports the Councils Strategic objective of efficient and effective public services that improve the lives of residents.

**Gail MacFarlane**

**Chief Officer – Shared Services Roads & Neighbourhood**

Date: 05 May 2021

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**Person to Contact:** Ian Bain, Greenspace Manager

**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All