

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services

Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee: 4 October 2006

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**Subject: War Memorials – West Dunbartonshire**

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the current condition of the War Memorials within West Dunbartonshire and outline remedial work undertaken in 2006.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1** The Grounds Maintenance Section undertakes an annual condition survey of West Dunbartonshire Council's War Memorials in conjunction with independent monumental sculptors.
- 2.2** Stone cleaning and basic repairs such as painting of joints and replacement of missing lettering are undertaken annually prior to November Remembrance Day Services.

## **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** Appendix A of this report outlines the current condition of each of the 15 memorials within the authority and identifies remedial action required. The appendix shows that as at September 2006, 5 memorials were in a satisfactory condition, 7 memorials required minor work which has been / continues to be undertaken during September and October 2006 and 3 memorials require more extensive remedial work.
- 3.2** The three memorials which require significant refurbishment are at Kilmarnock, Christie Park and Levensgrove Park.
- 3.2.1** Kilmarnock - The memorial base requires extensive pointing, the lettering on nameplates requires to be painted and the entire memorial requires specialist cleaning. A Conservation Statement has been developed for the work, planning consent has been granted and the work, which is estimated at approx. £4,000, will be undertaken prior to November 2007.
- 3.2.2** Levensgrove Park – As part of a two phase upgrade the memorial was cleaned, lettering was repainted and the surrounding fence was painted in 2005. Planning consent and a Conservation Plan are in place and Phase two of the works are underway and will be completed by end of October 2006. Work includes painting of walls, resetting of the steps and specialist cleaning; this valued at approximately £6,600.

- 3.2.3** Christie Park Cenotaph - Consultations are ongoing with Historic Scotland regarding Christie Park Cenotaph which is constructed mainly of sandstone with slate panels inlaid. The sandstone has stood up relatively well to the effects of weathering however the slate panels have not fared so well and display signs of deterioration commensurate with the age of the monument. The slate panels also suffer from chips and scrapes caused by vandalism.

The slate panels require to be buffed off before any work to re-gild the lettering can commence. Unfortunately the lettering has become so shallow in many places that the buffing process would render much of the lettering illegible. The re-cutting of lettering in situ is not a viable proposition due to the technical difficulties and the degree of danger involved. The removal of plaques for rework is also not practical because of the danger of breakage would be impossible to avoid.

For these reasons it is recommended that the slate panels are removed and replaced with light grey granite panels. Historic Scotland is not supportive of this specialist recommendation and is requesting that the slate panels be replaced with new slate.

The memorial also requires extensive pointing and specialist cleaning and the total value of the work is estimated at £81,000. Discussions are currently ongoing with Historic Scotland and no work is currently scheduled.

- 3.3** The general public have shown an increase in the desire to obtain information regarding local and family history through war memorial records.
- 3.4** Currently being developed is a Weblet on the Council's main website that will provide information on war memorials and other relevant topics. The site will also encourage further research and may grow through time.

#### **4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1** None

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** The cost of remedial work undertaken during 2006 has been calculated at £13,190 and a breakdown is shown on Appendix A.
- 5.2** It is anticipated that the cost of proposed work on Kilmarnock Memorial in 2007 as outlined in Section 3.2.1 above will be funded from the 2007/2008 Grounds Maintenance Revenue Budget.
- 5.3** No funding source(s) has yet been identified for the necessary works at Christie Park Memorial.

## **6. Conclusions**

- 6.1** Most of the authority's memorials are in good condition given their age and the regular routine maintenance and cleaning carried out.

Identified work remains outstanding on two memorials – Kilmarnock and Christie Park Cenotaph.

Sources of funding for the Christie Park Memorial are currently being investigated.

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1** **Members are invited to note progress in implementation of a programme of remedial works to memorials within West Dunbartonshire and request officers to investigate funding opportunities to carry out further remedial works.**

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**Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services**

**Date: 12 September 2006**

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**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All

**Appendix A:** West Dunbartonshire War Memorials - September 2006