

## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by the Executive Director Educational Services

Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee: 9 September 2008

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**Subject:** WDC Publication -'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven*).

#### 1. Purpose:

- 1.1 To advise the Corporate Cultural Sub Committee of new WDC local history publication 'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton, & the Vale of Leven*), and of the background to its production.

#### 2. Background:

- 2.1 Awards for All Scotland is supported by the Scottish Arts Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund, sportscotland and the Big Lottery Fund. Awards for All Scotland awards grants of between £500 and £10,000 for people to take part in art, sport, heritage and community activities, and projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community
- 2.2 In 2007 WDC Culture Section curated 'Bustles, Britannia, & Big Ideas' a major exhibition at Clydebank Museum focusing on life in West Dunbartonshire in the Victorian era. The exhibition proved hugely popular attracting 3101 visitors, including many to various outreach events including seminars, talks and a music hall concert at Clydebank Town Hall.
- 2.3 An outcome of this exhibition was demand from the public for a legacy of resources. Through discussion and options appraisal it was agreed that these legacies would take the form of:
- a) Production of educational resources for schools including a Victorian Handling Kit, and cross curricular teacher resource packs aimed at P6/7 pupils.
  - b) Publication of a major local history book on life in the Victorian era across West Dunbartonshire.
  - c) The production of online resources on Victorian life in the area, hosted by the council's website 'Museum Without Walls'.
- 2.4 In the last 12 months working with Friends of Clydebank and independently WDC Culture Section has secured external funding for production of all the above legacy projects. A comprehensive Victorian handling kit for schools, and cross curricular teachers packs on the Victorians era in the area will be launched to schools this autumn. Online resources including 3-D modelling

of artefacts, and downloads are currently being developed, these will be completed and to go online to the public by the end of 2008.

- 2.5 The Friends of Clydebank Museum is a charity established with the aim of supporting Clydebank Museum. In summer 2007 WDC Culture Section approached the Friends of Clydebank Museum to initiate a joint project to realise the desired legacy projects.
- 2.6 As a result of these discussions in September 2007 an application for funding of £8,130 was made to Awards for All Scotland by the Friends of Clydebank Museum towards the publication of a local history book on the Victorian Era in West Dunbartonshire. Included in the application was funding towards linked online resources.
- 2.7 This application included match funding of £500 from the Friends of Clydebank Museum and £2,000 from WDC Culture Section budgets.

### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1 In November 2007 the Friends of Clydebank Museum were awarded funding in full of £8,130 from Awards for All Scotland towards the projects outlined in 2.6 above.
- 3.2 This award enabled the publication of a local history book telling a pictorial story of life in West Dunbartonshire during the reign of Queen Victoria which enriches our understanding of local history in the area.
- 3.3 In January 2008 a project team was established involving representatives from the Friends of Clydebank Museum, WDC Culture Section and Libraries Section, along with community representatives.
- 3.4 Adverts were placed in local papers, and posters promoted in WDC branch libraries to solicit Victorian photographs of the local area and people. The photographs were then scanned by a museum volunteer and provenance of the photograph recorded along with links to the area. These invaluable and unique images have been included in the publication and have been added to the council's local studies collection.
- 3.5 Images and text from the exhibition 'Bustles Britannia and Big Ideas', were edited to provide a series of thematic insights into life in the area during the reign of Queen Victoria. This era witnessed significant social changes and the impact of industrialisation on the villages and towns of the authority.
- 3.6 Themes within the publication focus on: Victorian Social Conditions, Crime and Punishment, Trade and Empire, Victorian Leisure and Entertainment, and the Victorian Family. The inclusion of a Victorian timeline frames local changes against a national and international backcloth.

- 3.7** Local Studies librarians from WDC Libraries Section were invited along with two local historians, to provide an introduction and discrete overviews of Victorian life in: Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven.
- 3.8** This initiative has brought together council services and the community working in tandem to provide a valuable resource which informs and celebrates the heritage of West Dunbartonshire. Representative groups and individuals were involved at all levels of the decision making process.
- 3.9** It is believed that 'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven*) is a valuable resource for the public and schools alike. There is a growing interest in local history and genealogy, which this publication will feed into. In addition this WDC book will provide a valuable resource to schools particularly at the P6/7 stages to support local history and cross curricular studies.
- 3.10** Following 6 months of research and work the 100 page book 'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven*) has now been printed and will go on sale to the public in October 2008 at a price of £7.99. A public launch will be held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September officiated by Provost Agnew, Ambassador and Spokesperson for Cultural Development.

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

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

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

- 5.1** The proposals within this report amount to £10,630, £8,130 of which was funded by the Big Lottery Fund. Funding of £500 was provided by the Friends of Clydebank Museum. The remaining £2,000 has been provided by WDC Culture Section from within existing budgets. A breakdown of the proposed expenditure is shown within the Awards for All application attached to this report as Appendix 1.
- 5.2** The total cost of the production of the publication 'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven*) was £4,750 providing 2,000 copies.

#### **6. Risk Assessment**

- 6.1** There is no increased risk to the Council associated with the contents of this report.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This paper informs the Sub-Committee of the background to and publication of 'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven*). It indicates the aims and benefits of this new WDC publication linked to the strategic aims of the WDC Cultural Strategy:
- a) To conserve, interpret and celebrate our culture and heritage.
  - b) To promote West Dunbartonshire's cultural identity locally, nationally and internationally.
  - c) To increase access and participation in cultural activity for all citizens.
  - d) To recognise and promote the role of culture to cross-cutting agendas including Economic Development, Social Inclusion, Regeneration, Lifelong Learning and Health among others.

## 8. Recommendations

8.1 The Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee is invited to:

- a). Note the content of this paper and the aims and objectives of the publication 'Life in the Victorian Era' (*Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven*).
- b). Note the content of this paper and the partnership working behind this new WDC local history publication.

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**Terry Lanagan**  
**Executive Director Educational Services**  
**Date: 5 September 2008**

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**Appendix 1** Awards for application – Friends of Clydebank Museum (to be distributed to members of the sub-committee at the meeting on 9 September)

**Wards Affected:** All Council Wards are affected