

northkelvinmeadow@gmail.com

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Dear candidate

North Kelvin Meadow Campaign – Request for support

As you are a candidate for Councillor within the Canal ward of Glasgow City Council, we would like to seek your views on our campaign and ask you to lend your support to us in the pursuit of our objectives.

North Kelvin Meadow is an area of green space north of Clouston Street. Formerly football pitches that were neglected and abandoned by Glasgow City Council, it has now become a semi-natural meadow and woodland. It is a much-loved, much-used and much-needed open space in the heart of a residential area.

In the absence of any maintenance by Glasgow City Council, a group of volunteers has, in recent years, managed the land providing growing and composting facilities and meeting regularly to keep the land free from litter and fly tipping. The group has brought the abandoned changing rooms back into use as a community gardening shed. Raised beds were installed to provide growing facilities in an area of the city with insufficient allotment provision.

All this was achieved with minimal funding and a lot of hard work. Astonishingly these efforts resulted in court proceedings being brought by Glasgow City Council against the campaigners. The Meadow has since received several neighbourhood awards from Beautiful Scotland and continues to be a thriving community resource in an increasingly built-up area.

Despite this success, the Council continues to deem this land, which has never been built on, as surplus to the city's requirements and wishes to sell it off for 90 private housing units, including a parade of £600,000 townhouses that are clearly far beyond the reach of the majority of Glasgow residents.

The Council has appointed its preferred developers, signed legal documents and since 2008 local residents have been kept in limbo waiting for a planning application to be lodged. Four years on, this has still not happened. The land remains unsold and so still belongs to us all. The Council continues to refuse to meet with the campaigners and the developers continue to be vague about their intentions. This means that the community cannot progress with any substantial improvements to the land (e.g. repairing fences); neither can we apply for any of the many grants that we know are available and that have already funded similar community projects.

As Glasgow City Council hasn't felt it necessary to consult the community about the use of the land, our campaign group carried out its own consultation, distributing questionnaires to all addresses in the surrounding streets. 94% of respondents agreed that the land should be kept as a green space for the community to use. 96% supported the work done by the North Kelvin Meadow

campaign group and want to see it continue. An online petition in support of the campaign has attracted over 1200 signatures, and the campaign has attracted support from MSPs and been mentioned favourably during debates in the Scottish Parliament. It also has the support of community councillors in the surrounding area.

In theory the Meadow should also have the support of the Council. But the Council's policies have been ignored when it comes to dealing with North Kelvin Meadow.

City Plan 2 presents a policy of encouraging building on brownfield sites in preference to greenfield sites, and yet the Council's Housing Land Audit classifies the Meadow as a greenfield site. Furthermore, Glasgow City Council's own "Sports Pitch Strategy Policy and Implementation plan", which applies to abandoned pitches such as this, states that:

"Any proposals to dispose of sports pitches should be **subject to consultation with local communities**, and require a determination by Council that these pitch spaces are **not required as part of any other open space function**."

And yet the Council has not consulted with the Community and has still not recognised the important function that the Meadow provides within the North Kelvinside area.

Our campaign requests that Glasgow City Council immediately revisits its decision to sell the land for housing; that it acknowledge the Meadow's current role as a key open space; and that it fully and openly consults with the local community over ways in which the land can be maintained as a permanent open greenspace for the benefit of the whole community.

If elected as Councillor you will be able to influence the policy of Glasgow City Council and will be able to help us save this land for future generations. We would therefore like your views on our objectives and to know if we can count on your full support along with that of the rest of your party/group within the final Council.

Any response you provide to us will be published on our web site (www.northkelvinmeadow.com) and will be circulated to our list of volunteers and friends via email.

Should you wish to discuss this further with us, learn more about the history of the land or have a guided tour please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

on behalf of North Kelvin Meadow campaign

