

NORTH KELVIN MEADOW CAMPAIGN

P r e s s R e l e a s e

LOCAL RESIDENTS AND MSPs STUNNED BY GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL'S THREAT TO BULLDOZE COMMUNITY GARDENING PROJECT

Glasgow, 18 September 2009:

LOCAL RESIDENTS AND MSPS HAVE REACTED WITH DISBELIEF TO NEWS THAT GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL IS THREATENING TO BULLDOZE THE NORTH KELVIN MEADOW, A GREEN SPACE CREATED BY A LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUP ON UNSIGHTLY DERELICT LAND NEGLECTED BY THE COUNCIL FOR OVER A DECADE.

The destruction of the Meadow, currently slated to take place from Monday, 21 September, comes ahead of a proposed sale to a property developer. The land has never had building on it and has always been a community resource.

The threat to destroy the Meadow follows a court action brought by the Council in July, whereby it sought an interdict to prevent Douglas Peacock and Karen Chung from the North Kelvin Meadow Campaign from putting up bat boxes on the Meadow, and planting flowers and vegetables. The Council has now raised separate proceedings against the 'Occupiers' of the Meadow by way of a summary cause action and has been granted a decree for ejection. The group was given no notice of the new action, although Ms Chung is appealing the interdict against her. Papers concerning the matter were not addressed to a named individual or sent to a proper postal address. The group only learnt what was afoot because the postman delivered the papers to a well-known local personality, who passed them on.

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Frances McCartney, solicitor for Ms Chung, has written to Glasgow City Council asking it not to take any further steps with an eviction until a meeting has taken place. She has also asked the Council for details about the separate eviction action it has raised.

Commenting, Robert Brown MSP said: "This action seems to me to be astonishingly heavy-handed. It is sad when the interests of developers are preferred to those of local people and of attractive environmental projects. It is time for the Council to rethink its priorities."

Patrick Harvie MSP said: "Glasgow City Council has gone too far this time. Labour Councillors and their officials should be ashamed of themselves for threatening to use force against the community here. Local residents have made serious efforts to improve their local environment, and should be supported by the Council, not intimidated. Even at this late stage we would urge the City to think again. If not, Greens will join the North Kelvin Meadow campaigners in a peaceful protest and do our best to prevent this wanton official vandalism."

He added: "Allotments, raised beds and community spirit around the North Kelvin Meadow replaced broken drink bottles, drug-dealing, litter and abandoned furniture. If the Council succeeds with this eviction, a thriving green space will be at serious risk of reverting to the squalor and social disorder that preceded it. Is that really Labour's vision for Glasgow?"

The North Kelvin Meadow Campaign was set up last year by local residents fed up with having a rubbish-strewn eyesore on their doorstep. The community group has cleared the land of rubbish, planted flowers and vegetables, and cleaned up and secured a syringe-strewn disused shed. In July, Meadow supporters packed out Glasgow Sheriff Court when Mr Peacock and Ms Chung appeared to defend the interdict sought against them by the Council. A paper and online petition protesting at the Council's decision to sell the land to a developer has attracted over 800 signatures.

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Notes for editors:

The **NORTH KELVIN MEADOW CAMPAIGN** was launched on 13 October 2008 after Glasgow City Councillor, Jim MacKechnie, rejected out-of-hand the results of a survey conducted in August 2008 by Douglas Peacock, chairman of the **NORTH KELVIN MEADOW CAMPAIGN**. The survey showed local residents overwhelmingly supported the creation of a green space on the former Clouston Street pitches and opposed the Council's plan to sell the land to a property developer for the construction of 115 flats.

Since its launch the **NORTH KELVIN MEADOW CAMPAIGN** has worked to transform the former pitches, which have been disused for over two decades, into a multi-use community green space comprising allotments, an orchard and a wild meadow. Members of the local community have come together to clear the land of rubbish, repair and paint fences, and install composting facilities and raised-bed allotments.

A 'Big Lunch' event (part of the nationwide Eden Project) at the North Kelvin Meadow on 21 July attracted support from over 100 local residents. An online and paper petition protesting against GCC's plans to sell the North Kelvin Meadow to a property developer has attracted over 800 signatures.

The online petition can be found at: www.gopetition.com/online/28274.html