

THE ST. ANDREWS PRESERVATION TRUST LTD

NEWSLETTER NO 10 - MARCH 1998

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

By now you will all know about our Green Belt Report which makes two main points. 1) there should be a Green Belt round St. Andrews, and 2) suggests specific boundaries to implement the Green Belt. The outer boundary proposed is basically the vanishing point for views from afar towards the town and its setting. The inner boundary largely prevents further expansion of the town except westwards along Craigtoun Road out towards Denbrae Mill. Our consultants have advised us that this is the area which will cause least damage to the town's landscape setting.

You may be a little less clear about what the Strategic Study is. Put at its simplest, it is a consultative proposal by Fife Council which sets out how they suggest St. Andrews might expand in the period up to 2011. Three options have been put forward, and shortly we will all be invited to comment on them. The Trust is unable to recommend approval of any of these options.

It would be nice to see a certain degree of fit between our Green Belt proposals and the Strategic Study options. Sadly I have to tell you there is none. The Strategic Study suggests two main areas where further house-building could take place. One is to the south of the town, roughly from Safeways to St. Nicholas. There is no doubt that development there would do irreparable damage. The other main area proposed is a large one roughly extending both west and north from the Strathkinness High Road. The Trust considers that expansion there would cause just as much damage. Please take a turn out the Strathkinness High Road and look at the lovely views back into town over rolling farmland and playing fields. Are you willing to see that destroyed for ever by housing?

The Trustees have had some difficulty in formulating their arguments against the Strategic Study as Fife Council have not yet released any of the reasons supporting their proposals. Hopefully these will start to emerge soon. We believe that economic factors will figure strongly, such as cheapness of providing the new distributor road, sewage and other infrastructure requirements. These will not be easy to combat. So it is very important that you, our members, take action and write to Fife Council. Please help us by responding during the consultation period. If you do not do so, there is almost no hope for a Green Belt which will protect the landscape setting of St. Andrews effectively. Suggested objections are listed in the enclosed leaflet.

PROGRESS OF THE GREEN BELT CAMPAIGN

As Trustees we knew that our immediate job would be to make sure that the Green Belt issue features in the public's response to the St. Andrews Strategic Study. So in November we held a meeting to launch the St. Andrews Green Belt Forum as a way of involving a wide cross-section of townspeople. We had an encouraging attendance of over 50 people representing more than 20 local and national organisations, and more are joining us all the time. We explained the need for a Green Belt round St. Andrews and how the process of getting Green Belt status works. After a lively discussion we set up a Green Belt Forum Committee. This committee is busy organising the publicity which we shall need for the campaign. The evening ended with most acceptable refreshments provided by Clive Burhouse.

The Forum Committee has met several times since the New Year. We have been producing posters and leaflets to ensure that as many people as possible know about Green Belt and use it in their responses to the Strategic Study. A copy of the leaflet is enclosed with this Newsletter, and we hope you will find it helpful. Please use it to help you when you make your own response. We have also had a meeting with our planning consultant, Mrs Ruth Day who suggested various ways in which we might respond to the Strategic Study.

Green Belt had a bit of extra publicity on 22 February during a recent St. Andrews weekend conference of the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland to whom we are affiliated. After a Green Belt talk, members of the Trust's Long Term Planning Committee toured the outer boundaries of St. Andrews with members of the conference, showing them the classic views of the town from the different approach roads. Needless to say they were all impressed by our case and a number volunteered to support our campaign. A few caustic remarks were also made about some of the recent housing developments on the edges of town!

Finally the Trust and the Green Belt Forum are jointly organising a Public Meeting to discuss the Strategic Study and how best we can raise the Green Belt issue in responding to it. This will be on **Wednesday 1st April at 7 p.m.** in the Supper Room of the Town Hall. **Please come along** and bring your friends. We need a good level of public response to the Strategic Study.

.....AND ST. LEONARD'S FIELDS

A few weeks ago we heard that the Reporter, who conducted last October's Public Inquiry into the building of 109 flats and houses on the St. Leonard's Fields site, had upheld Fife Council's refusal for planning permission. This is very good news for the Trust which was most ably represented at the Inquiry by our planning consultant. Mrs. Ruth Day. because indirectly this helps our Green Belt case. If the site is not to be used for housing, this strengthens the argument for building a new hospital there. We shall be meeting representatives of Perth and Kinross Healthcare Trust in the near future to put the case to them.

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Over the coming year the Trust will be launching some fund raising events. The costs involved in moving to Queen's Gardens, laying out the museum garden and mounting a Green Belt campaign make it imperative for us to replenish our funds and build up a contingency fund. If we are to fight our corner it is probably going to be at some financial cost. In the last Newsletter this was highlighted and the result was several very generous donations and an increase in membership.

The first fundraiser will take place on Sunday 28th June. Under the auspices of Scotland's Garden Scheme the Trust has organised 'Secret gardens of St. Andrews'. We have found some very exciting gardens, some quite small, all showing what a marvellous backdrop the buildings of the old town make. This is an opportunity to promote the work of the Trust and make visitors aware of our Green Belt campaign, even being able to show the landscape setting of the town as seen from many of the secret gardens. Tea will be available in four of the gardens and this will hopefully bring a healthy boost to our funds

The second fundraiser will be an auction in the Autumn. Further details to follow. All members will be asked to donate some item. If you happen to have a McTaggart or Naismith in storage perhaps it could be donated!

A Safari Supper is another fundraising idea under consideration. All Trustees will be asked to act as hosts and hopefully also some members. We are looking at late Spring 1999 as a probable date.

Dates for the diary

Public Meeting to discuss the Strategic Study in relation to the Green Belt.

**Wednesday, 1st April at 7 p.m.
in the Supper Room, Town Hall**

Please come along and bring as many interested friends as you can.

**30th March - 1st April
Fife Council Public Exhibition
regarding the Strategic Study in the
Town Hall.**

Museum

Easter Opening:

**Good Friday, 10th April - Easter Monday,
13th April (2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.)**

The Exhibition will be 'A journey through the Lade Braes'.

**Summer Opening: Saturday 23rd May
(2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.)**

The Exhibition will be 'Cinema in St. Andrews'.

Members' Preview:

Friday, 22nd May at 6 p.m.

A.G.M.

**Thursday, 21st May, 7.30 p.m.
Supper Room, Town Hall**

Speaker: Mr. Frank Orr, Durham Green Belt Campaign.

**A summer outing, possibly to Loch Tay
Crannog, to be arranged.**

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