

Apology for lack of notice on tree felling

Gregor White

A land owner has apologised for not consulting properly before commencing tree felling operations - at the same time as appearing to accuse right to buy campaigners of nimbysism.

Last week the Observer reported how police and Stirling Council officers attended at Holmehill in Dumblane, following reports of tree felling in the area by site owner Ian Stirling.

Holmehill by Dunblane Cathedral lies within a designated Conservation Area and though none of the trees affected in the operation carries a Tree Preservation Order the council should have been notified before work began.

This was acknowledged in a statement issued at the end of last week by Wardlaw Gardens Ltd, a company owned by Mr Stirling.

"The company has a right to manage the land which has been neglected for so many years that it is now a wilderness of tangled undergrowth, self-seeded trees and garden and household rubbish," the statement read.

"Although it is the objective of the owner to address the problem of past lack of site maintenance, the company

acknowledges that it should have consulted Stirling Council before undertaking the action.

"Wardlaw apologises for this, this is now in hand and Wardlaw Gardens Ltd is working with the council to come up with a solution to the problem."

Of the Holmehill Community Buyout Group which states its aim is to buy the land for community use the statement added: "The owner of Wardlaw Gardens Ltd would like to state to the media that he has previously offered to gift to the Holmehill Buyout Group a major part of the land at Holmehill and set up a sinking fund to maintain the gifted land in perpetuity. The previous owners also invited them to make an offer to buy on the land.

"The group have never taken up either of the offers or given any indication that they have or can raise the funds to buy the land or even have a coherent plan if it were to be gifted to them for free.

"Wardlaw Gardens Ltd would also dispute that the group are at this time actively campaigning and fund raising."

"Wardlaw believes they represent their own interests as householders living nearby the land, and do not represent the entire community as they claim.

"It would appear that they in fact want no development



Holmehill Tree felling took place on the site

Row with buyout group

of any kind on the land and simply want it left as a wilderness."

In response David Prescott, acting vice-chair of the buyout group said Wardlaw's statement had been issued before a public meeting attended by Ian Stirling last Thursday (July 4) which clearly demonstrated the strong local support for the aims of the Holmehill Group and added: "It is not appropriate

for the Holmehill Group to be party to any agreement that is contrary to the Local Plan Designations, which is a public open space.

"However we wish to join the dialogue on the future of Holmehill within the current Local Plan Designations, and are expecting Mr Stirling to provide a comprehensive Woodland Management Plan for the whole area to rectify the years of neglect.

SAUNDERS/STIRLING/STIRLING

Last week, as often, there was a noticeable excitement, restlessness and ready to finish feeling among the children.

This was matched by a feeling of resignation, or palpable fear, from parents all too aware of the seven weeks stretching out before them.

Many of our churches provide places for children to go without their parents during holidays. We do this because we are committed to being involved with communities and because we genuinely love people and want the best for them.

Here are the details of holiday clubs at churches that will look after your children at various times and places across Stirling over the summer: Cornton Baptist Church, July 29 to August 2; Stirling Baptist Church, August 12 to August 16, and Sunday August 18, and North Parish Church, Brethead, August 12 to August 16, 10am to 12.30pm.

For more info e-mail office@churchatstirling.co.uk

Cash boost for Denny CAB

An organisation which helps the most vulnerable is one of five community groups set to get a cash boost.

The Denny and Dunipace Citizens Advice Bureau (DDCAB) is getting £25000 from the Earlsburn Community Fund panel.

The fund is provided by wind farm developers Falck Renewables Wind, through its subsidiary Earlsburn Wind Energy Limited.

Office manager Margaret Gray said: "This will enable the bureau to continue to provide a much needed service to local people who are in need of support to resolve money related issues."

Other beneficiaries from the fund, managed by Foundation Scotland, include the Denny and District Community Green Initiative, Carron Valley and District Community Council, the Denny and Dunipace Heritage Society and Cambusbarron Community Council.

Further information can be found at www.foundationScotland.org.uk/programmes-falck-renewables.aspx