

Holmehill fence causes anger

Access still blocked despite request

Gareth Jones

A landowner has come under increased pressure to remove fencing from a site used by the public.

A meeting of Dunblane Community Council on Monday heard that heras fencing remains in place at Holmehill and that landowner Allan Water Developments had so far failed to replace trees that were felled without permission last summer.

Councillors have bemoaned the fence, which they have said blocks public access to the site, however the landowners have said it is necessary for safety reasons and that discussions with Stirling Council are continuing to carry out work to replace the trees that were cut down.

Green Councillor for Dunblane Mark Ruskell urged the public to continue to access the site.

He said: "The landowner is attempting to barricade himself in against the law, the Local Development Plan and the entire community. There is a way out of this mess which is to comply with the lawful requests of Stirling Council then

negotiate with the community on a buy-out of the land. I would urge everyone who values Holmehill to assert their rights under access laws and continue to responsibly enjoy the entire area - there are big gaps in the fencing."

SNP Councillor Graham Houston said: "I am disappointed that the developer has not shown more willingness to ensure that this valuable asset is available to the community. It is greatly used and appreciated by adults and children alike and is a great source of learning for the children of St Mary's Primary. Leaving unsightly metal fencing in place does nothing for the appearance of the area and would not be required if the site was left in a proper condition as it was prior to the unauthorised felling of trees."

Chairman of the community council Terence O'Byrne said that residents felt the fence served no other purpose than to antagonise them, and said Allan Water Developments had previously ignored requests to remove fencing at a site in Barbusch.

The council were, he said, "very disappointed" with the actions of Allan Water managing director David Stirling at Holmehill. "It was reported

at our meeting on Monday night that he has now appeared to refuse to remove the heras fence which he erected supposedly as part of the re-instatement works imposed on him by the council after he felled the trees on Holmehill last year," added Mr O'Byrne.

"He has also failed to complete the re-instatement works by the deadline of March 31, and, we were told, has come up with the lame excuse of having another plan he wants the council to consider which is 'coming soon.'"

Mr Stirling denied that the company had failed to meet the deadline set, and said the fence would remain until the works planned are completed.

He said: "A larger scope of works are being discuss with the council. These works are ongoing and programmes and details of these are in the process of being fleshed out. It is not therefore correct to say that a deadline has failed to be met when the remit for the site has been increased and dialogue on the matter continues."

"The fencing has been discuss with council access officers. It will remain in place to protect our staff and the public while the long overdue ground management work is ongoing."



Nice one Former Scotland manager Alex McLeish and last year's winner Pat Griffin hold up a card to publicise the Grassroots Awards, watched by Milton AFC members 020414miltonfc_1

Milton get a visit from ex-Scotland manager

Bannockburn-based football club Milton had a special visitor to their Bluebellwood home on Monday when former Scotland manager Alex McLeish dropped in.

Pat Griffin, who has been with Milton as a player, coach and committee member for the past 40 years, won the inaugural People's Award at the 2013 McDonalds Sunday Mail SFA Grassroots Awards.

Nominations for the 2014 awards are now underway and Alex McLeish was at Milton this week to help publicise this year's event.

During his time at the club, Pat has been a player, coach and has now moved into a committee member role,

overseeing the development of the club which is now one of the most successful in Central Scotland.

Alex McLeish said: "Milton is a fantastic Grassroots club, and Pat is an extremely inspiring volunteer."

"It is important to the development of the national game that clubs like Milton AFC exist, without them football across Scotland simply wouldn't exist."

"It is even more important that we recognise the people that have dedicated countless hours to providing an opportunity for their local community to enjoy football."

For more on the 2014 awards, visit www.McDonalds.co.uk/awards

The landowner is trying to barricade himself in against the law

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