

# Conservationists praise clearing of log debris

## Cumberland Avenue campaign paid off as trees are removed

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**A "VISUALLY incongruous" pile of logs which have lain at a site in Helensburgh for almost five years has been removed.**

Trees were controversially felled in April 2011 at the land in Cumberland Avenue, sparking a long campaign by locals to clear up the mess.

After years of campaigning, a local group have said they are "glad" the logs have finally been cleared.

The log pile at the Cumberland Avenue site was ordered to be cleared by Argyll and Bute Council in June last year, after a petition signed by hundreds of local residents was submitted to the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee.

The council also ordered clear up of debris and bund on the site.

Landowners challenged the order imposed by the council, appeal-

ing to the Scottish government.

A decision made in October 2015 by the government stated the log pile had to be cleared, although other debris at the site was not found to be visually intrusive, meaning the landowners were partially successful in their appeal.

In confirming the order to clear the pile of logs, which was called "unsightly" by campaigners, the Scottish Government Reporter stated: "The log pile, and the trunks and branches comprising it, are substantial in scale and visually prominent in views from Cumberland Avenue and adjoining residential properties.

"I do not regard the log pile as a feature that would be expected or characteristic of an open area within a residential environment.

"I find it to be visually incongruous, and to detract from the appearance of the site and the character of the locality."

A campaign to "clear out that mess" was launched by local group, the Helensburgh Commu-



■ The log pile has been cleared at Cumberland Avenue

nity Woodlands Group, in 2015.

A petition gathered hundreds of signatures, and was presented to Cllr David Kinniburgh, chair of the PPSL committee, at Helensburgh and Lomond's area committee meeting in April 2015.

Now the pile has been cleared, David Adams, HCWG convener, said: "We are glad that on this oc-

casión the landowners decided to comply with the order and so avoided any need for the council to implement it directly.

"Now that the log pile has gone, the owners must restore longstanding public access to the land, which they have refused to allow since 2007. HCWG intends to ensure this happens as soon as possible."

## Authority successes

■ A COMMITTEE of councillors will be told of some of the successes of Argyll and Bute Council at a meeting today.

A report for the Performance Review and Scrutiny committee, prepared by Chief Executive Sally Loudon, highlights the council beating several targets.

The number of people visiting libraries this quarter of October to December is 864 per 1,000 population, the target is 846.

The number of visits to council leisure centres is also higher than the target of 23,000, with 24,683 visiting in the past quarter. Councillors will also be told of the first phase of resettling Syrian refugees in the region.

There have been 10 families resettled in Rothesay, who are "adapting well to Scottish life".

## New position

■ COUNCILLOR Robert MacIntyre has taken on a new role within the council.

He was recently appointed as vice chair of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area committee.

His appointment follows the resignation of Cllr George Freeman from the administration. Cllr MacIntyre's appointment was made at a full council meeting.