

# COMMUNITY BUY-OUT NEWSLETTER NO 6

February 2019



## TIME TO REVERSE YEARS OF WOODLAND DECLINE & MISMANAGEMENT

Castle Woods and the open land at Cumberland Avenue, have long been designated as Open Space Protection Areas, covered by Tree Preservation Orders, and recognised as Key Environmental Features of the town. In addition, Castle Woods is classified by Scottish Natural Heritage as ancient semi-natural woodland, and its northern half is recognised as a Local Nature Conservation Site.

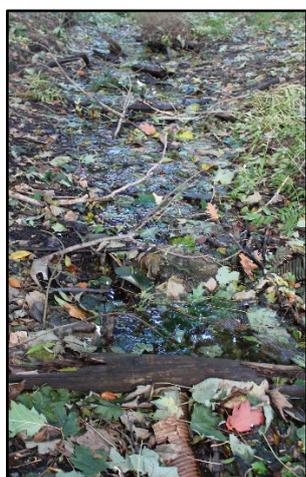


Cumberland Avenue



Castle Woods

**None of these designations have prevented years of environmental decline and mismanagement.** Cumberland Avenue is scarred, for example, by the remnants of previous felling activity and by rapid encroachment of Himalayan Balsam and non-native species (see photos above and below). Castle Woods suffers, for example, from blocked drains, fly-tipping, litter and anti-social behaviour more generally (see photos to the left). Here, native species and ground cover are also being crowded out by rapid growth of Rhododendron and Laurel, while some trees close to boundaries need better maintenance & management.



Castle Woods

These protected woodlands deserve much better care & management. We think this is best achieved by bringing both areas into community ownership & implementing the management plans we have produced through local community consultation. We are exploring how best to take advantage of new legislation to achieve this.



Cumberland Avenue

Specifically, under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, HCWG is entitled to apply the Scottish Government for what amounts to a **'compulsory' community buy-out** of land that is deemed abandoned, neglected, or in a detrimental condition. We will need to hold and win a Community Ballot before we can apply, so to reverse years of woodland decline and mismanagement at Castle Woods and at Cumberland Avenue, we will need as much local support as possible.

**To find out more about our plans, come along to our next AGM:**

**Date:** Mon 18 February at 7.30 pm

**Place:** Helensburgh Parish Church Halls, Colquhoun Square

**Speaker:** Jon Hollingdale, Chief Executive, Scotland's Community Woodlands Association



You can also visit our website at [www.hcwg.co.uk](http://www.hcwg.co.uk) and follow us on Facebook at Helensburgh Community Woodlands Group

**JOIN OUR CAMPAIGNS TO BRING THE LAND AT CUMBERLAND AVENUE AND CASTLE WOODS INTO COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP**

**The more members we have, the stronger we are and the better the chance of transforming & protecting these areas for everyone's benefit!** HCWG membership costs just £15 per adult or £25 for two or more adults in the same household, from now until the end of 2019. Please support our campaigns by completing the details below:

**Name(s)**

**Address**

**E-mail**

**Landline**

**Mobile**

I/We are over the age of 16, eligible and registered to vote at the above address, and support the charitable purposes of Helensburgh Community Woodlands Group

**Signed:**

**Please return to HCWG, 31 Ardencaple Drive, Helensburgh, G84 8PT with the cheque for £15 or £25 made payable to Helensburgh Community Woodlands Group**

**Email:** [hcwg@outlook.com](mailto:hcwg@outlook.com)

**Website:** [www.hcwg.co.uk](http://www.hcwg.co.uk)

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Charity Number SC044648