

Friends of Dundee Law

Welcome pack

With its breath taking views across the city, historical features and tranquil woodland walks, the Law is a special place, treasured by Dundonians of all ages. The Dundee TWIG project agrees that the Law is a fantastic green space and feel that local people should have a greater involvement in what happens on the Law and play a vital role in its management and development. In order to help local people become more involved in positive action on the Law, we are looking to form a Friends of Dundee Law group.



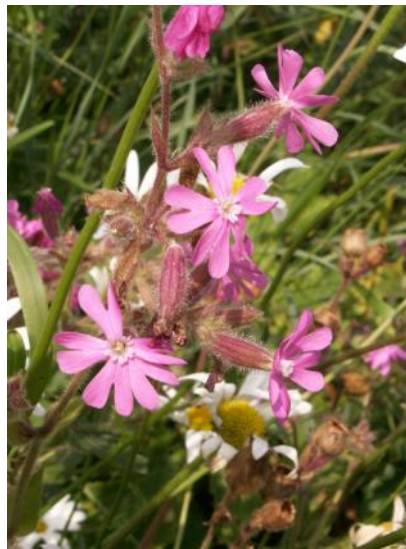
Anyone with an interest in the Law is welcome to join the group which will be supported by the Council's Environment Department and Community Officers. To kick start the project, Forestry Commission Scotland have provided a grant through the Community Seedcorn Fund. This will support the group's activities and events throughout the first year. Additionally, the Environment Department are currently putting together a Law Masterplan. This will contain an array of proposed environmental improvements i.e. path & steps restoration and woodland management, and also enhancing the heritage of the site for the public to enjoy.

If after reading this welcome pack you would like to join the Friends of Dundee Law or are interested in finding out more please contact Jen Thomson. Contact details can be found on the back page of this pack .



An introduction to the Dundee Law

The Dundee Law is a popular urban green space and prominent feature on the Dundee skyline. There is approximately 8.25ha of woodland with additional areas of open ground which greatly contribute in providing wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. The Law lies within the Coldsides area which is home to approximately 19,500 residents however this landmark is popular with Dundee residents and visitors alike, as well as giving an identity to the city as much as the Discovery and Tay Bridge. The site is classed as a city heritage park by the Dundee Open Space Strategy 2008-2011 and presents significant opportunity for projects to enhance its status as one of Dundee's most important open space areas. It attracts a variety of recreational users including woodland walkers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, runners and allotment holders. In addition to being a significant local landmark, due to the view point from the Law's summit (174m) and war memorial located there, the site attracts many tourists.



BIODIVERSITY ON THE LAW

The Dundee Habitats and Species Survey undertaken in 2000 covered the whole of the Law and regards the broad-leaved woodland as a locally important habitat and a valuable resource in the Dundee area. The grasslands are described as having the potential to be "one of the best conservation sites in Dundee." The main tree species identified in this survey include the following: Silver Birch, Sycamore, Beech, Scots Pine and Larch.

From 2004 onwards, the Dundee Red Squirrel Project has been protecting the city's red squirrels. The Law's woodlands provide good habitats for the squirrels. The Law is home to many birds including Kestrels which hunt small mammals on the Law including voles, mice and shrews.

Why start a Friends of Dundee Law group?

The Law provides opportunities for recreation and enjoyment, benefiting health, relaxation, peace, play and tranquillity for local residents and visitors to Dundee. It is vital that these opportunities are available for all to enjoy. The Friends of Dundee Law will play a vital role in protecting and enhancing the Law. Working in partnership with the Council, it will give local residents a greater involvement in what goes on in this green space. The group may be able to establish itself as a charitable organisation and raise funds for projects.

Friends groups value and appreciate the city's parks and open spaces, and encourage stewardship and potential improvements to be made. This can make a huge difference. By joining the Friends of Dundee Law you can help contribute, identify what needs to be done, help to clarify priorities for local people and form a practical partnership with the Council.



By providing the residents of Dundee with an improved green space and the opportunity to get involved in improving their green space will provide a range of benefits. This includes increased physical activity and improved health, well being and knowledge of the outdoor environment and biodiversity. Additionally, social benefits are gained. Increased community interaction and cohesion, personal development through learning new skills are valuable and can be life changing for many people.

Ideally, the Friends of Dundee Law group will consist of people from a range of backgrounds with different connections to the Law. So whether you're a dog walker, allotment holder, passionate about Dundee's history or just enjoy the view from the top, your opinion and input towards the Law's development is extremely valuable in enhancing this green space.

A very brief **HISTORY OF THE LAW**

Born of volcanos, the hard rock of the Law has survived fault movements and glaciers. It was used as an Iron Age hill fort and inhabited in Roman times. In the early days of steam a tunnel was dug through the top to take railway wagons from the docks to the country, and a memorial to the fallen of the First World War now dominates the view point. Dundee Corporation purchased the Law from Dudhope Estates for £4500 in 1878, in a response to public pressure for a recreational space as the population of Dundee grew.

FORTIFICATIONS

The original Fort at summit is thought to date from the Iron Age. The site is also thought to have been used as a lookout point by the Romans during 1st century AD. The Scottish army probably encamped on the Law prior to battle with the Picts on the plain of Pitaply, AD 834. Additionally, the summit was occupied by forces of Edward I (1296, 1303) and General Monk (1651) with its appearance likely to have been altered during successive occupations and entrenchments.

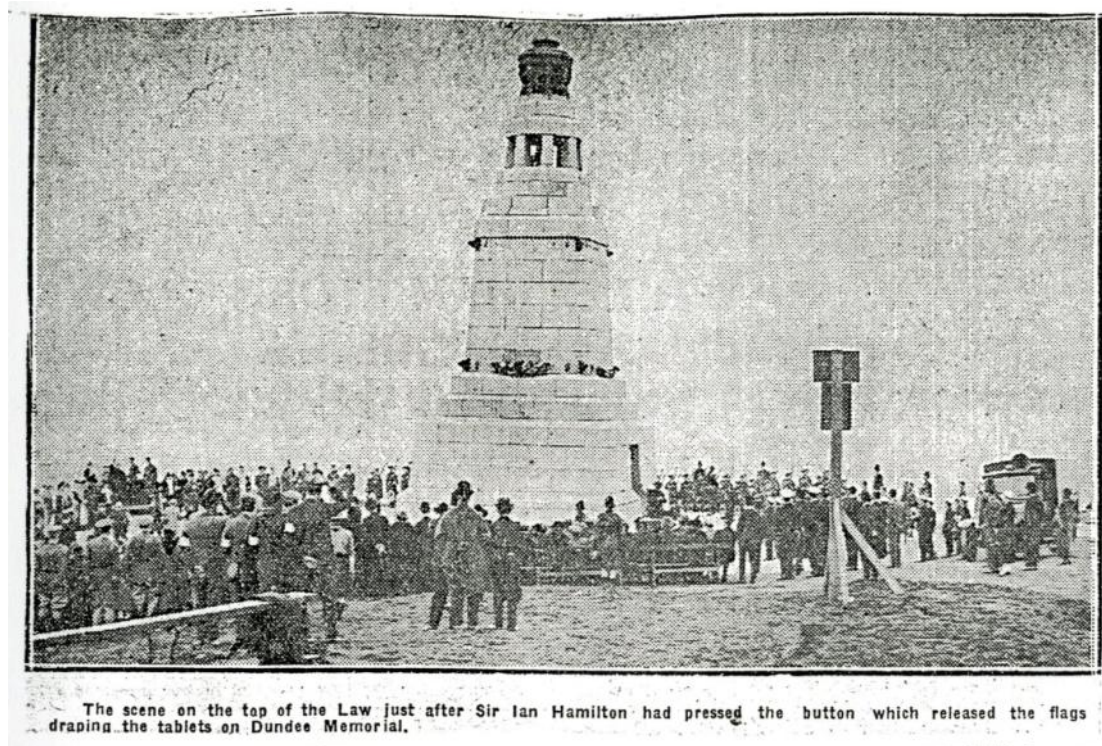
STEAM RAILWAY

In 1829 the Law had a 300 metre long, 3 metre diameter tunnel driven through its eastern flank to carry the Dundee to Newtyle Railway. Originally drawn by horse with stationary steam engines, the first locomotive was introduced in 1833. It was operated until 1861 when a new line around the Law was built. After closure of line, the tunnel was used as engine shed and as a Mushroom farm in 1898. A section was reinforced as air raid shelter in 1939 with brick blast walls added to interior and at South entrance. The northern end of the tunnel was buried underground by 1950s. The southern end of the tunnel was sealed and filled in 1981.



WAR MEMORIAL

During the early 20th century, the Law was considered as the original site for Mills Observatory however a public meeting was held on 14th January 1919 where it was decided to erect a war memorial on the Law in remembrance of Dundee men who fought in the great war. A committee was formed and several formations were discussed including a combined monument and museum; and monument and observatory. A competition was held to find the design for the war memorial. The competition was won by Thomas Braddock of Wimbledon.



Dundee Courier, 16th May 1925

1990s TO PRESENT DAY

In the 1990s, Physical changes were made to the Law including the upgrading of the summit viewing platform with new interpretation boards and improvements to the path network. In 2005, The Council was awarded funding from the Forestry Commission's Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme (SFGS). Work included thinning of the woodland area to remove dead, diseased, damaged, unstable or unsafe trees; and clearance of invasive species. The Woodlands In and Around Towns Initiative also funded new signage, interpretation panels and way markers on the Law.

The Coldside Open Space Quality Audit was carried out in 2008 and complemented by a further Community Engagement exercise undertaken in 2009. Issues identified by this survey included reassessing the provision of dog bins, vegetation maintenance, replacement of worn out paths and steps, encouragement of more community activity and identifying new functions for disused areas.

The Law Masterplan is currently being prepared by Dundee City Council and identifies a range of potential environmental improvements on the Law.

The Law Masterplan

Over recent years the local community and the Environment Department have identified the need for improvements to ensure that the Law remains one of Dundee's major tourist attractions and continues to meet the needs of local people. The Coldside Community Forum has been one of the key groups which have pushed for improvements to be made.

A working group was established to create a masterplan; the key features on the Law were identified, along with a list of improvements required. Draft proposals were prepared and a series of public consultations were undertaken. The key outcomes of the consultations established that the public have a high regard for the Law and that both the local community and visitors to the Law identified a number of key elements that they like. The consultation also identified concerns and suggested improvements to the Law. Following this public engagement, the outline proposals for the Law have now been confirmed.

The principle proposals are:

- A programme of improvements to the road leading to the top of the Law.
- A condition survey of all the paths on the Law, which will result in a costed action plan.
- The development of a woodland management plan. Care will be taken to ensure that any tree planting does not obscure the views.
- Improvements to the war memorial, including the screening or removal of the gas cylinders used for lighting the memorial.
- A review of the operation and provision of the toilets on the Law.
- Continued improvements to the security of the allotments on the Law.
- Support for local community or allotment groups to develop the Old Piggeries site.
- The development and improvement of the entrance to the Law, including proposals to open up the views across the city. Improvements to the landscape surrounding the old pump house on Law Road and improvements to the car park on the approach to the Law.
- Replacement of the whale sculpture at the entrance to the Law
- Support for developing a local Friends group.

- The adoption of the **Green Flag** standard. Assessments will look at the following criteria:
 - A welcoming site
 - Healthy, safe and secure
 - Clean and well maintained
 - Sustainability
 - Conservation and heritage
 - Community involvement
 - Marketing
 - Management

Funding

The Environment Department are currently working on a bid to the **Heritage Lottery Fund** in order to support the above improvements. This is a 2-stage application process. The 1st stage bid is currently being progressed and is due to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in June this year. The items included in the bid address both social and physical improvements of the Law's heritage with an emphasis on community engagement and learning. The World War 1 centenary year provides a unique opportunity for engaging the local community, particularly young people, with this fundamental piece of history and how it has effected the present day. The Law's natural heritage will also be a key focus of the bid with proposals to increase biodiversity and the quality of habitats found on the Law.

Funding has already been secured from **Forestry Commission Scotland**. This contribution is for supporting the Friends of Dundee Law group formation. Establishment and implementation of an action plan which is to include a programme of meetings and events throughout the year i.e. litter picks, woodland walks, dog walkers' days, environmental education days, green gyms, tree planting etc. The training of volunteers for environmental activities and guided walks; and production of leaflets, posters and other advertisements is also included in the funding.

THE LAUNCH OF...

FRIENDS OF DUNDEE LAW

On Sunday 12th May, a public event was held on the Law to mark the launch of the Friends of Dundee Law. From 11am to 3pm, members of the public came to learn about the Law's history, natural heritage and proposals included in the Law Masterplan. There was also the opportunity to join the Friends of group and take part in the free activities offered at the event. This included:

- A guided walk highlighting the Law's many historical and geological features. This was provided by Dundee Leisure & Culture's Curator for geology and zoology, *David Lampard*, and also the Council's Tree Officer, *Eric Hamilton*.
- The *Lord Provost* unveiled a new art sculpture on the Law. The sculpture has been made possible with funding from the Dundee Partnership Regeneration Fund and is part of the first stage of investment at the entrance to the Law. As well as reflecting Dundee's whaling history, it reflects the Iron Age history of the site and is decorated with motifs of finds from archaeological digs on the Law. The artist, *Kevin Blackwell* has worked with school children from *SS Peter and Pauls Primary School* in creating the design.
- Two free dog training sessions were a popular attraction at the event. As dog walkers are one of the main user groups, it was important to engage them in the creation of the Friends of group. Local dog trainer, Sandra Boe, a senior instructor with *Discovery Dog Club* provided the sessions which included basic obedience and agility. Information on responsible dog care, free doggy bags and a 'guess how many doggy biscuits are in the jar' competition were also offered.
- A range of children's activities were offered including face painting by *Sheila Docherty*. *Cath Latham* provided Forest Schools which offered marshmallow toasting, den building and the chance to make nettle and mint tea. This was very popular with young families, enjoyed by both children and adults. The *Countryside Ranger Service* engaged children with the biodiversity of the site with bug hunts and nature trails whilst promoting their outdoor activities and events around Dundee.



The Lord Provost and artist Kevin Blackwell unveiling the new whale bone sculpture



David Lampard providing an informative guided walk on the historical and geological characteristics of the Law

Inside the marquee, people could read about the development work proposed for the Law. This included the Law Masterplan and Woodland Management Plan. Members of the Council's Environment Department and Community Officers were also present to provide further information. *Christina Donald*, Curator for early history at McManus Galleries, displayed archaeological finds relating to the Law's Iron Age history.

Free refreshments and a bake sale which was provided by local charity, *Boomerang*, were also enjoyed by attendees. It is estimated that approximately 80 people attended the event despite the cold weather. This mainly consisted of families with young children. 16 people signed up to join the Friends of group and now over 50 people are on the Law Masterplan mailing list.

Overall, the event was a great success. Thank you to everyone involved in its organisation and delivery, and to all the people who attended!

FIRST MEETING: The Friends of Dundee Law are having their first meeting on Thursday 20th June at 6pm at the Maxwelltown Information Centre, Carnegie Street. All are welcome.



Top left-A family enjoying forest schools; Top right-Inside the marquee; Bottom left-The whale bone sculpture; Bottom right-Dog training session.

LAW WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

All of Dundee's woodlands are managed for recreation and biodiversity. These urban woodlands provide both habitat for woodland flora and fauna and diverse open space for public enjoyment, as well as adding to the visual amenity of the City.

In April 2012, the Law woodlands were surveyed, which provided management information and prescriptions to be used to compile a 5-year woodland management plan. This plan forms part of the wider Masterplan for improving the Law and also the Dundee Woodland Management Project which includes 18 of the city's woodland areas.

The Management Objectives for the woodland management plan include the following:

- Increased appropriate usage of the woods both by 'formal' means e.g. Ranger and Education Services and by 'informal' users such as walkers and cyclists.
- Improved progress towards the position of continuous cover woodland for Dundee's woods.
- Increased public awareness of the flora and fauna of the woods.
- Monitoring and control of vermin access to sensitive areas.
- An increase in the amenity and habitat value of Dundee's woodlands.
- Reduction of exotic and invasive species in favour of native species, promoting natural regeneration towards the goal of continuous cover forest.
- Enhance the natural heritage value of appropriate sites.

Due to current financial constraints, external funding is essential for this management work to be implemented. In the past, woodland projects have largely been funded by the Forestry Commission's funding scheme - Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT). Although this scheme is now closed, it is hoped that a similar scheme will be launched in 2014/15.

The woodland will be managed to ensure the current healthy trees can continue to grow successfully. Some trees which are of poor form, dead or damaged will be removed to create space for current healthy trees to thrive and for young trees to be planted. These actions will benefit and enhance the existing amenity and biodiversity interests and diversify the current age structure and species of the woodlands.



If you would like further information on any of the information included in this pack, please contact
Jen Thomson.

Address: Dundee City Council, Environment Department, 353 Clepington Road, Dundee, DD3 8PL

Email: jen.thomson@dundeecity.gov.uk

Tel: 01382 434798