

WORKING TO IMPROVE TOWN AND WATERFRONT

A N McInnes asks a number of questions about the Helensburgh Partnership [Action, not talk is required, Your Page, July 5].

The Helensburgh Partnership was set up in February 2006, tasked with promoting and facilitating the improvement of the town centre and waterfront.

Its financial sponsors are Argyll and Bute Council and Scottish Enterprise Dumbartonshire who have each allocated £300,000 to the project over three years.

In other words, the partnership has an expenditure budget of £200,000 each year for three years.

The partnership is governed by a board chaired by Bill Brackenridge. Five organisations are represented on the board. These are Argyll and Bute Council (three members), Scottish Enterprise Dumbartonshire (one member), Helensburgh Community Council (one member), Helensburgh Chamber of Commerce (one member) and the Retailers Association (one member). None of these positions is remunerated.

Mr McInnes enquires if the partnership tells local people what it is investigating. I would refer to articles in the Advertiser on May 10 and 17. One referred to a major retail study and the other to a traffic management strategy for the town centre. Both of these studies are due to be completed at the end of July.

In answer to another of the questions asked — yes, the partnership has asked residents about their shopping habits and preferences. An important part of the retail study includes a household survey of more than 700 residents in the town.

They were asked to respond to a detailed questionnaire, specifically constructed for Helensburgh.

However, background research is just part of the work carried out by the partnership, much of it behind the scenes.

The underlying points made by Mr McInnes are valid ones. It is time for action — but it is important to back this up by a positive attitude.

I believe Helensburgh has tremendous potential but we all need to believe

in its future. There is a lot of work to be done and transformation won't happen overnight.

I accept that the partnership needs to spend more time communicating and engaging with the public of Helensburgh. With the assistance of the Helensburgh Advertiser and our soon-to-be constructed website, I shall undertake to do that.

If readers have any thoughts or concerns they wish to discuss, telephone 679495 or email info@helensburghpartnership.co.uk or visit us in person by prior appointment.

Derek Anderson
Chief executive
Helensburgh Partnership