



Glasgow Humane Society and the Water Safety Group

George Parsonage was involved in an incident at the Quay complex that resulted in him organising a meeting of safety minded people including Police, Council and Developers to consider how best to tackle safety problems on the waterways. George was delighted when the Group was taken over by Glasgow City Council. The Group now consists mainly of Glasgow Humane Society, various departments of Glasgow City Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Peel Holdings (Clydeport) and the Nautical College with other Groups attending by request as and when necessary. Among the “other groups” attending have been Safe Tay, Lochwatch Loch Awe, Ayrshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, North Lanarkshire Council, ROSPA, SEPA and Scottish Water. The Group meets roughly every 3 months.

Read more:-

Glasgow Humane Society (GHS) since its inception in 1790 has highlighted water safety in and around Greater Glasgow

In 1815 the GHS had rescue apparatus being kept at the Broomielaw at Meikle Govan, at Port Dundas and at Rutherglen Bridge; (A similar situation is occurring in this the 21st Century with premises near waterways being encouraged to keep rescue apparatus)

1846 By the AGM 9 lifebuoys had been sited along the river by the Society; (now over 300)

Even in those days there was “reckless and inconsistent conduct of evilly disposed persons resulting in loss and damage to the buoys and attached lines”.

In 1860 The GHS were quoted in the North British Daily Mail on safety railings.

In 1861 the Glasgow Herald stated “The alarming frequency of such accidents and the fatal issue in which they so often result demand that the matter should receive the immediate attention of the authorities, the Directors of the Humane Society, or both so that parties may be warned against bathing in such dangerous quarters”—refers to sand holes in the vicinity of Richmond Park. (In 2015 the GHS are complaining about unfenced Suds Ponds in the same area)

1871 the Society persuaded the Town Council to erect a substantial iron railing along the previously unprotected south bank of the river from Wellington Street to the Suspension Bridge, which was “at once ornamental to the locality and a complete protection” (2015 parts of this area requires safety railing upgrading)

1890 complaints regarding the “broken state” of the fencing Adelphi Street at the foot of Waddell Street

1876 the Directors (of the GHS) deplored the state of a footbridge over Jennies Burn when the steps leading to it at the east end were washed away leaving a deep hole.

Due to the third weir being removed in 1879 (which the GHS complained of and warned against) incoming tides carried harbour pollution up river. The erosion of the banks in the upper reaches increased dramatically the dredging costs downriver. The GHS House became endangered and had to be supported as had the Suspension Bridge. Glasgow Corporation had to obtain Parliamentary powers to expend £50,000 in repairing and strengthening the banks along the entire extent of the municipal boundaries.

1880 The banks of the river from Oatlands to Rutherglen Bridge referred to in last year’s report as being in a dangerous state, are now decidedly worse, as, by the removal of the weir, the descent of the water is much more rapid, and is washing away the embankments. Efforts have repeatedly been made to induce the proprietors of these lands to put this part of the embankment in a proper and safe condition, but remonstrance is unavailing, and as it is beyond the bounds of the city, the Magistrates have no legal control.

Throughout the 20th Century the GHS continued to give advice and to campaign for a safer approach to our City waterways and their banking

George Parsonage wrote (5th March 1993) to Glasgow Council regarding lifebelt vandalism and informed that the Society was trying to encourage firms along the riverside to keep safety equipment on their premises

In 1993 George joined the West of Scotland Marine Safety Committee Strathclyde Sub Committee Coast and Islands Working Group (to become the West of Scotland District Marine Safety Committee Upper Clyde Sub Group)

In 1996 consultation was made with the GHS and the WSG regarding the type of fencing and safety equipment required at Braehead Shopping Centre—Ref BDP S7164 11.10.96

On Sunday 6th September 1998 a youth drowned at a spot where there were no lifebelts due to vandalism. A group was formed to look into and advise on safety along the river Springfield Quay Complex became a fine example of safety with the following

Yellow Lifebelt poles at top of ladders

Spare lifebelts kept in security Office with public notice to that effect.

Other safety equipment e.g. throw ropes yellow lamps to be clipped onto each ladder when required

Certificated training for staff from GHS in the use of throw ropes and lifebelts

Top of ladders and railings painted yellow.

Notices erected warning of "Danger" and "Deep Water"

CCTV placed on walkway

Railing meshed to prevent easy climbing



GHS went on to recommended a sloping embankment on the north bank beside the new bridge to be built at Finnieston Street

GHS against the infilling of Docks and the narrowing of the river

June 1998 request for the establishment of a Glasgow City Council working group to look at safety issues on the River Clyde”

June 1999 the GHS group advised Govan Housing Association re Lifesaving Equipment

And in July 1999 GHS advised Crudens Estates and GCC Protective Services on safety features at development at site at McNeil St/Ballater St

August 1999 GHS advised as requested landscapers regarding a fence for the south banking between the Albert Bridge and Richmond Park.

16th August 1999 209 years after the Glasgow Humane Society first met, George Parsonage was invited by DRS to attend the inaugural meeting of the Glasgow City Council River Clyde Working Group meeting on August 24th. At this meeting George was given the position of adviser to the Group

September 1999 George Parsonage entered into a series of correspondence and meetings with the Science Centre regarding safety

29th October 1999 a Community Safety Conference was held in Nye Bevan House. Speakers were; Gordon Jackson MSP, Mohammed Sarwar MP (Safety in the constituency), Chief Superintendent Ricky Gray, Dr Stone (Yorkhill Hospital), George Parsonage (River Safety), Phil Walker (The community’s contribution to safety)

1999 After an agreement between GHS and GCC lifebelt positions on the Albert George 5th and Victoria Bridges were move to central locations

29th November 1999 Glasgow City Council set up an overall Working Group to consider safety issues around the River Clyde and other waterways, the first meeting being held on Wednesday 8th December at 1000hrs in room 126 City Chambers

During 1999 George Parsonage advised several times DRS regards River development. DRS suggested that the River Rules and Guidelines should be included in with Council leases. Rules etc. should cover the entire river within the City Boundaries and the South Lanarkshire area (I.e. the bank opposite Glasgow). Subsequently George produced a booklet entitled “Glasgow Humane Society Water Edge Safety handbook For Architects Planners and designers” which is still in use and is upgraded every year

8th Dec 1999 saw the inaugural meeting of Glasgow Water Safety Working Group

During the next few years the group expanded to include Clydeport, Strathclyde Police, SEPA, British Waterways, Strathclyde Fire Brigade and the Nautical College.

In the last 10 years the following is some of what has been achieved.

Collation of land ownership along the river Clyde

Treatment of Hogweed and Japanese Knockweed

Safety features advised and accepted for the new Clyde Arc Bridge

Advise on development of Custom House Quay

Water Safety action plan drawn up

Advice given as to location of water based activities

New vertical bar fencing of varying heights for Glasgow Green water edge and re alignment of fencing.

Quay wall ladders repaired and extended, new ladders placed where required.

Advice given on lack of slipways

All Bridges on the Clyde to be given individual names in order to ensure that rescue personnel go to the right place.

Advice given on safety fencing along river Clyde

Advice given re safety features for Millennium Bridge

Sub Group set up to look into a code of practice aimed at individual users i.e. boat users, anglers, rowers etc.

Briefing Report on "Investigation of Navigational Issues on the River Clyde"

Emergency gates to riverbanks were painted yellow

Sections of fencing for lifebelt positions were painted yellow



Contact made with Chief Solicitor re City Council statutory responsibilities for the River Clyde

Input into Council City Plan

Report on flooding being prepared

Advice given on dangers of private developers raising towpath levels without raising fence height

Padlocks for gates were agreed to be purchased—one key for All gates if possible. If more than one key/lock—keys/locks to be colour coded—beginning of the “daisy chain” system

Use of grab chains discussed

Agreed to compile action plan on the following-Legislation, Environmental enhancement, Access and egress, Rescue, Education and Training

It was agreed unanimously that the present launch point for rescue south of the weir was inappropriate, and it was agreed that significant upgrading was required to improve safety when a rescue boat is launched.

Lifelbelts placed on all gates and yellow fencing sections

Requested the improvement of the following

System of removing dumped vehicles from River

System of removal of graffiti from bridges and emergency noticeboards

Emergency lighting repairs

Cleaning of rubbish from Riverbanks and pruning of bushes/trees

System of checking on river edge gates and inspection and maintenance of padlocks

Requested no flow of water over top of weir gates at Glasgow Green

Request to remove dangerous pile near to Glasgow Bridge (removed by GHS)

Yellow keep clear boxes were painted on the roadway in front of the yellow gates



GPS signage (wording and numbers arranged between Glasgow Humane Society and Strathclyde Police Storm Control) was placed on gates for public reference in emergency

“Safe Glasgow “was put on lifebelts (ceased in 2003 due to expense and change of supplier)

Arranged for an extra bar to be placed in the riverside rail around Science Centre—this was a compromise as the existing railing could not be replaced

Throw ropes purchased by Glasgow Community Initiative were placed by Glasgow Humane Society in various establishments) with agreement of the owners of said establishments) along the River Clyde

Repairs carried out on riverside fences at various locations

CCTV Cameras were placed at strategic sites.

CCTV mobile vehicles for use in ensuring permanent CCTV poles are put in the correct places.

Gates at various locations locked with emergency pass keys

All other users at gates (rowing clubs, canoeists, fishermen, etc.) were required to add their own padlock to the required gate in a daisy chain fashion; I order to ascertain who the culprit was in the event of a gate having been left unlocked/open.

Note that previously there had been heated arguments between river users with

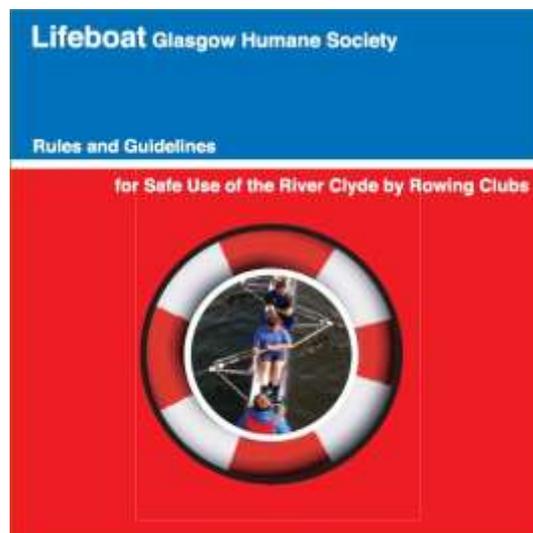
each denying having left a gate open or unlocked. The clever “daisy chain” situation removed any dubiety.

Extra bikes were supplied for Police patrols along walkways—money made available by Community Safety Initiative



Booklet—“Rules and Guidelines for safe use of the river Clyde”—produced by Glasgow Humane Society endorsed and published by the Glasgow City Council Water safety Working Group

Booklet “Glasgow Humane Society Water Edge Safety handbook For Architects Planners and designers--produced and published by Glasgow Humane Society endorsed by the Glasgow City Council Water safety Working Group and Direct Architecture and Related Services



Dead slow—you are responsible for your speed—signs were produced after co-operation between Glasgow Humane Society and Land Services



Water Kills signs were designed by Glasgow Humane Society made by LES and erected at the St Andrews Bridge and High Court entrances to Glasgow Green on a trial basis.



Danger Weir signs were designed by consultation between Glasgow Humane Society and Land Services and were erected by LS at each gate of the Tidal weir and by GHS at an appropriate position downstream of the weir on the north bank and at two appropriate positions again on the north bank upstream of the weir.



Semi circles were cut into the coping stone of the quay wall to recess ladders.



Two lifebelts were placed at the Model Boat Club building in Richmond Park by Glasgow Humane Society as requested
Agreed with safety caveats pontoon designs for river Clyde
Discussed legal situation regarding safe use of waterways
Agreed that railing at, and top of ladders at City Inn be painted yellow
Proposal that all lifebelts should have name on them for return purposes
Advised that there should be lifebelts at Science Centre
Group highlighted and it was agreed, that removal of items that would attract children to the water should be a priority in British Waterways Action Plan for the Canal
Advice given on waterside developments
Advised re unsafe type of fencing along river Kelvin beside Kelvin Hall

Report received and advice given re clean-up of river Kelvin
Agreed all vehicles dumped in river should be removed
Discussed and advised on bank rubbish beside Paddy's Market
Advised that Hogganfield Loch is a safe venue for Dragon Boat racing
Agreed that for safety reasons a name should be given to the lower suspension bridge
Glasgow Humane Society submitted a paper on the Cleaning up of and Improvement of the riverbanks from Tidal weir upstream.
Advice given re proposed infilling of tidal basin disused dock land at Govan
Advice given on development at Meadowside Quay
Contact made with South Lanarkshire re safety on the Clyde and its banks
Through the Group GHS advised on safety at Ross Hall Academy next to River White Cart
.As requested by Group, Glasgow Humane Society removed debris from river Clyde bridges
Advised on report "River Clyde-making safe/cleaning river embankments
Recommended Water Witch boat
Rubber duck race discussed and advice given
Discussed removal of overhanging ledge at Custom House Quay
Advised given on railings at Harbour complex
Fly tipping and litter cleared from banking
Selected tree removal and pruning along with crown lifting
Selected removal of shrubs and pruning to improve vision lines
Removal and installation of new perimeter fencing
Herbicide treatment to invasive weeds
Broomielaw bandstand removed
Sheriff Court frontage removal of shrubbery, area put to grass.
Provision of more lifebelts along Clyde Walkway
Waterwitch craft purchased—plan to have name chosen by schoolchildren
Advised regarding railings and lifebelt provision for Finnieston Bridge
Discussed lifebelt provision upstream to Carmyle and at Govan
Proposed and discussed improvements for Kelvin Walkway
Abandoned vehicles report discussed along with prevention methods
Lighting of bridges discussed and advised on.
River Festival discussed and advised on
Second boat for cleansing agreed
River Kelvin survey to be followed by bank maintenance project
River Clyde removal of extraneous material from both banks
Access issues including abandoned trailers
Oil Pollution from Jennies Burn
Removal of fallen trees at Jennies Burn
Lifebelt coverage at Science Centre
Prevention of parking at Waterbus Pontoon
Adelphi Street fencing

New berth for Waverly
Advisory/planning developments
Loch Lomond seaplane
Handrails and Signage for Tidal Weir
Park Event safety
By Laws for all waterways
Gaps below safety fences
Central phone number for reporting of found/missing lifebelts, e.g. RALPH
Agreement on final design for fence at Glasgow Harbour Project
Forth and Clyde Canal project
River Festival
Diesel oil spillage on Clyde
Trees breaking up river banking
Sample safe fence erected
Painting of Boggleshole Bridge
Chains welded to Riverbank gates at Glasgow Green and Adelphi Street.
Lifebelt posts on Bridges painted yellow.
3 cars removed from river at Belvidere.
Gate at Clyde Place closed and locked.
Discussed the problems of safe fishing
There is a gate at the southwest corner of the Glasgow Bridge, which is welded shut. This area has recently been the scene of much emergency service activity and there is a need for the gate to be put into use again with a chain and padlock. There are persons sleeping rough in this area under the Railway Bridge.
Tunnelmaster attended meetings
Notice to be given to developers of the recommended design of riverside fence
Carlton place safety to be looked into
Safety barriers at Shore St and Carstairs St to be dealt with
Post at Dalmarnock Bridge to be replaced with gate/barrier.
CCTV ordered for Waterwitch
Kiosk at waterbus pontoon discussed
Advice given on re-siting of "Renfrew" Ferry
Request for all proposed developments along the water edge to be presented to the Group
Request that Council literature talking about the waterways should be presented to the Group before being issued.
Upgrading of water edge Adelphi St recommended.
Finnieston bollards to be replaced
Boom gate placed at Dalmarnock Bridge
Millennium Bridge safety dealt with
GHS rope throwing courses given to tidal weir operators, Park Wardens and other necessary Council employees.
Egress/access problems at Finnieston and G 5th Br have been dealt with
Group has not yet received proposals re fencing at R Kelvin.

Gate at south west corner of Glasgow Bridge to be looked at re safety
Plans for Richmond Park are still not available--discussed safety
Noted that plans for new weir at Kelvin are not being progressed
Sewage outflow near Kings Bridge discussed and advised on.
Warning notice re flooding to be placed on north walkway at G5th Bridge
Clyde Gateway plans discussed and advised on.
East End Regeneration Route discussed.
Plans for New Transport Museum discussed.
Plans for Pacific Quay and Glasgow Harbour developments discussed.
River Users Group and River Festival discussed.
Notified of Clyde Flood Management Strategy Workshop
Possibility of submarine for Princess Dock discussed
Extra bar placed on railings at Govan and Clyde St Albert to Victoria Bridges.
Lifebelt poles with GPS signage erected at Govan
Glasgow Humane Society removed unnecessary lifebelt hooks along the quay
frontage of the exhibition centre/Crown Plaza Hotel
Unwanted poles along walkway have been cut away, stored and are available for
use as lifebelt poles.
Input into Sustrans development of cycle path upstream of Glasgow Green north
bank and assistance with tree removal by Glasgow Humane Society
Boom Gates repaired at Custom House Quay, Carmyle, Boggleshole and Cotton
Street
Powder coated yellow ladders placed on new pontoons
Powder coated yellow gate erected at Adelphi St
New GPS lifebelt positions along Adelphi St
New lifebelt positions for Auchenshuggle Bridge
Lifebelt positions identified, given GPS number and marked along towpath around
Commonwealth Games Village.
Gaps in Millennium Bridge filled in
Input into safe design for Smart Bridge and Cunningar Bridge
Gap in fencing at Smart Bridge closed.
New locks placed with chains on gates along river front Finnieston to old helipad
Boom gates placed at Shore St, Cotton St. and Waterside St
Safety improvements at Hogganfield Loch carried out