

DIGGING THE DYKE

RADICAL COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT

What's The Story?

In the early 1820s, wealthy Glasgow distiller Thomas 'Lang Tam' Harvie bought Westthorn estate in Dalmarnock and built huge walls around his property. One, Harvie's Dyke, ran to the Clyde, blocking a long-established public pathway along the riverbank. On Midsummer's Eve 1823, a crowd from surrounding villages gathered to tear down the hated wall. Their actions sparked a six-year struggle, culminating in a landmark House of Lords ruling that defended and defined rights to public pathways.

Uncovering The Wall

Incredibly, a large section of the western wall survives at Thorndyke Lane. Funded by Calton and Shettleston Local Area Partnership, this project brings together historian Professor Christopher Whatley, author of a recent book on the protests, Glasgow Building Preservation Trust and Archaeology Scotland.

Working with local young people, we will record the surviving remains and search for evidence of the eastern wall and Harvie's notorious 'watchtower', which he armed with live cannons. Alongside the archaeology, there are plenty of free events and activities on offer.



Harvie's Dyke, 1836.

Wm Simpson, R.S.

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BOOKING INFORMATION



Drop-in event, no booking required



Booking preferred



Please use the QR code or link to view and book programme events. All tickets are free. Advance booking is preferred, with limited tickets available for drop-ins.

Booking Link: <https://shorturl.at/x0AOi>



WHAT THREE WORDS: **///TRUCK.HOTELS.AMUSE**
WHAT THREE WORDS **///IMPACT.PROVEN.SPINE**

HOW TO FIND US

Harvie's Dyke is at the bottom of Thorndyke Lane, just off London Road. The dig site is around 300m southeast along the Clyde Walkway, about a 15-minute walk from Dalmarnock Station. Regular buses run along London Road. From Glasgow Green, it is approximately a 15-minute cycle or 45-minute walk along the Clyde Walkway.



2026 Glasgow Doors Open Days Festival
Thurs 17 - Sun 20 September



DIGGING THE DYKE

COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT: PROGRAMME



TALK: HARVIES DYKE

Join Prof. Chris Whatley for a fascinating tale of how ordinary Glaswegians took on an arrogant landowner and successfully defended 'the liberties of the banks of the Clyde'.

📍 Parkhead Library, Parkhead Hub

🕒 1pm - 2pm



HARVIE'S DYKE DIG OPEN DAY

Come along to the excavations and survey at Harvie's Dyke, chat to the archaeologists and get a chance to handle some 1800s artefacts.

📍 Clyde walkway

🕒 10:00am – 4:00pm



WALK: WEAVERS, WATER, WHISKY & WILDFLOWERS

Discover how the river shaped Glasgow's east end. Hear stories of the people, places and industries that defined the area, and learn how the Clyde is recovering from decades of neglect.

📍 The Tur, Cuningar Loop

🕒 11:00am – 12:30pm



URBAN SKETCHING WORKSHOP

FREE 'plein air' sketching workshop with Glasgow artist Fiona Fleming. Enjoy a relaxed introduction to urban sketching outdoors - no experience needed. All ages and abilities welcome, with materials provided.

📍 Harvie's Dyke

🕒 11:00am – 12:30pm



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WALK: EAST END RADICALS OF THE 1820S

Join Carolyn Wilson of Rebel Glasgow for a leisurely walking tour exploring the history of Glasgow's east end and the rapid industrialisation it underwent in the 19th century.

📍 Bridgeton Cross at the Bandstand

🕒 2pm - 4pm



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CYCLE: EAST END RADICALS OF THE 1820S

Join Carolyn Wilson of Rebel Glasgow for a cycle tour exploring the history of Glasgow's east end and the rapid industrialisation it underwent in the 19th century.

📍 Bridgeton Cross at the Bandstand

🕒 2pm - 4pm



PLAY: TAM HARVIE'S DYKE

Come along to the excavations and survey at Harvie's Dyke, chat to the archaeologists and get a chance to handle some 1800s artefacts.

📍 Harvies Dyke

🕒 4:00am – 10:30pm



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