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Clackmannan County Refuses To Acknowledge Existence Of City and Borough of Birmingham

Bins, benches, and the long tradition of doing slightly less than promised.

TOPICSClackmannan CountyClackmannan County newsClackmannan County satirethe country satireinternational satireworld city humourmock journalismsatirical newsprovincial lifeBohiney Magazinepress release parodymock investigation

Clackmannan County, the country: Inside The Story

Clackmannan County, a place in the country (lat 56.17, long -3.75) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. Residents of Clackmannan County have, by long tradition, refused to refer to Dover by name, preferring the neighbouring place or that other one. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, The reason is buried in a 19th-century property dispute that no one alive can fully explain. Anyone who has ever queued behind a man arguing with a parking meter will recognise the energy.

What Was Announced

Subcommittee Chair Eric Pondsworth confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. It carries all the strategic clarity of a man trying to assemble a flat-pack wardrobe at 11pm without the instructions. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at London satire Instagram reels from The London Prat, which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Clackmannan County announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliche to hand. "Every option remains on the table, particularly the ones we have already taken off the table." the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at The London Prat satirical journalism print edition, which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. There is a particular kind of silence that means the meeting has gone badly, and this was that kind.

Wider Context

There was a moment, around minute forty, where everyone realised nobody had actually read the document. Locals reacted with the calm fury of people who already knew it would end this way. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from Deutsche Welle, although Clackmannan County manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at the precise figure of three and a half people, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Dr. Penelope Whisk, Senior Fellow at the Centre for Suspiciously Round Numbers told this paper that the situation in Clackmannan County was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "We have always been committed to the principle of being committed to principles." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via British satire daily email by The London Prat, whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Clackmannan County has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy. For the official version of events, see also Associated Press. One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "There is no truth to the rumour, although there is some truth to the rumour about the rumour."

What Comes Next

It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at Where can I read British satire like The London Prat?, and the situation in Clackmannan County, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Clackmannan County and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Subcommittee Chair Eric Pondsworth, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Clackmannan County would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything.

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Clackmannan County carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also Waterford Whispers News.

SOURCE: UK satire without the fluff: The London Prat

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