



**Transport and Environment Committee**

**10.00 am Tuesday 14 January 2014**

Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

# Transport and Environment Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contacts
<p>Convener Cllr Lesley Hinds</p>  <p>Vice- Convener Cllr Jim Orr</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Robert Aldridge</li> <li>• Cllr Nigel Bagshaw</li> <li>• Cllr Gavin Barrie</li> <li>• Cllr Chas Booth</li> <li>• Councillor Deidre Brock</li> <li>• Cllr Karen Doran</li> <li>• Cllr Nick Gardner</li> <li>• Cllr Bill Henderson</li> <li>• Cllr Allan Jackson</li> <li>• Cllr Karen Keil</li> <li>• Cllr Mark McInnes</li> <li>• Cllr Joanna Mowat</li> <li>• Cllr Ian Perry</li> <li>• Cllr Andrew Burns (ex officio)</li> <li>• Cllr Steve Cardownie (ex officio)</li> </ul>	<p>Marie Craig Business Manager ☎ 0131 529 7739</p> <p>Cathy Wilson Business Manager ☎ 0131 529 3473</p> <p>Lesley Birrell Committee Services ☎ 0131 529 4240</p> <p>Stuart McLean Committee Services ☎ 0131 529 4106</p>

## Parks Quality Assessment and Green Flag Award

### 2013 PQA Results

Overall, parks quality continues to improve year-on-year, a reflection of resources being focused on areas of greatest priority by Neighbourhood and Specialist teams. Areas of improvement since 2012 include accessibility, safety and security, equipment maintenance, nature conservation, information/interpretation, grounds maintenance, and tree/woodland management. However, the most notable improvement is in the marketing of parks, no doubt aided by improved website data and the introduction of *Edinburgh Outdoors*.

Only 56% of parks met the Council's minimum standards in 2008. Now 93% of parks meet these standards. This year's assessments saw a further five sites meet the standard, leaving only 11 sites across the city to be brought up to grade. Moreover, for the first time the results show that no parks were assessed as 'Poor'. Overall 31 sites improved a bandwidth this year, meaning that 58% of Edinburgh's parks are now deemed 'Very Good' or 'Excellent'.

A slight dip in the percentage of Natural Parks meeting the Edinburgh Minimum Standard was noted and is due to new natural sites being assessed this year. This was balanced by another increase in the number of Community Parks meeting the standard. Notably, it continues to prove difficult for a number of Premier Parks to achieve or maintain the minimum standards expected of their classification, limited investment in ageing infrastructure and facilities being a key determinant.

This year, all but one neighbourhood (City Centre and Leith) met the target of 90% of sites meeting the Edinburgh Minimum Standard and analysis of the Average Park Quality Scores shows a similar picture of continued improvement across five of the six neighbourhoods.

Nevertheless, 37 of the 137 parks assessed this year suffered a reduction in their Park Quality Score, and of the seven sites that deteriorated most, four are of Green Flag

Further information can be found at:

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/495/parks\\_gardens\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/765/green\\_flag\\_parks/3](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/495/parks_gardens_and_open_spaces/765/green_flag_parks/3)

Award standard. This suggests that whilst efforts to raise the quality of the poorer scoring sites are a priority, it is also important that the standards of these award winning sites are sustained.

### **Park Improvement Plans**

Each year, three improvement actions are agreed for every park, based on the findings of the PQA process. This seeks to ensure that prioritised improvements are undertaken in every park, thereby improving quality across the whole parks estate. Site improvement recommendations for the coming year focus on grounds maintenance (76), infrastructure maintenance (53), information provision (44), litter management (36), and signage (35).

### **Green Flag Awards**

Green Flag Awards are a way of recognising parks of high quality. Judged on an annual basis, each park submitted for a Green Flag Award undergoes thorough scrutiny by independent assessors. The scheme also includes a Green Flag Community Award, which is to reward sites of excellence that are managed by the community.

In 2011 Edinburgh was included in the pilot of the Green Flag Group Award Scheme. This means existing Green Flag Award winning sites are automatically awarded Flags if the standard is maintained following self assessment and a peer review process. As a result the Council now has 24 Green Flag Award parks, plus a Green Flag Community Award for Corstorphine Walled Garden. This is more Green Flag Awards than any other UK local authority.

An additional four Green Flag Awards will be sought in 2014.

### **Edible Edinburgh**

The Edible Edinburgh initiative aims to develop a sustainable food city *'where good food is available and accessible for all, making for healthy people, thriving communities and a sustainable environment.'*

Chaired by Cllr Hinds, Edible Edinburgh steering group members include:

**Public Sector:** The City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian, Scotland's Rural College, Zero Waste Scotland and Edinburgh University.

**Private Sector:** Scotland Food & Drink, Iglu Restaurant, Waitrose, Stirfresh and Bread Matters.

**Third Sector:** Soil Association Scotland, Nourish Scotland, Transition Edinburgh and EVOC.

Over the course of 2013 Edible Edinburgh:

- i. has engaged with a wide range of organisations to explore how best to support Edinburgh developing as a sustainable food city;
- ii. has conducted a city-wide consultation on this;
- iii. has delivered **Feed the 5,000**, a major event engaging the public on issues of sustainable food and food waste;
- iv. is developing a strategy and action plan for a sustainable food city, and
- v. has established governance arrangements for delivery of the strategy through community planning structures (via Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership – one of eight cross cutting partnerships).

Some key benefits of this work to the Council include:

- i. supporting implementation of the Council's Sustainable Edinburgh 2020 framework and action plan;
- ii. supporting fulfilment of the Council's Public Bodies Duties arising from the Climate Change (Scotland) Act;
- iii. using food to engage a wide range of individuals, groups and organisations in addressing some of today's most pressing social, economic and environmental problems and to make healthy and sustainable food a defining characteristic of our city;

- iv. Supporting and strengthening community planning priorities linked to food under the themes of culture, health, land, environment, procurement and economy;
- v. production of a strategy to guide and drive the development of Edinburgh as a sustainable food city and supporting access to potential funding sources for action plan priorities, and
- vi. strengthening and expanding the activity and influence of existing food projects and networks in the city, particularly addressing food poverty.

### **Forthcoming activities:**

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#### **Edible Edinburgh**

The Edible Edinburgh steering group is currently developing a sustainable food city strategy and action plan based on engagement and consultation work to date. A final draft will be reported to the Council in due course requesting support for this as the city food strategy and for implementing relevant action plan priorities.