

Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Thursday, 6 December 2018

Fields in Trust Active Spaces Programme

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| Item number | 7.6 |
| Report number | |
| Executive/routine | |
| Wards | Forth; Portobello/Craigmillar; |
| Council Commitments | 43 |

Executive Summary

The City of Edinburgh Council has an opportunity to secure Active Spaces funding from Fields in Trust and strengthen its commitment to protect and improve its public parks by supporting the creation of a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust for West Pilton Park and Little France Park.

Fields in Trust Active Spaces Programme

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Committee supports the execution of a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust for West Pilton Park and Little France Park to enable Active Spaces funding and protect both parks as recreational open spaces for current and future generations.

2. Background

- 2.1 Using a Minute of Agreement, the independent charity Fields in Trust works in partnership with local authorities to protect parks and green spaces in perpetuity for current and future generations to enjoy. It is a robust yet flexible way of legally safeguarding a space, making it necessary that the owner seeks permission from Fields in Trust before unsympathetic developments can take place.
- 2.2 To date, the City of Edinburgh has registered 32 public parks with Fields in Trust, or under its previous operating name, the National Playing Fields Association, via a series of memorial or celebratory programmes: 3 King George V Memorial Parks (1930s-1950s), 3 Millennium Fields (2000), a Golden Jubilee Field (2002), 24 Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Fields (2011), and a Centenary Field (2014).
- 2.3 Fields in Trust is now seeking to secure new Fields in Trust protected sites across the UK as part of its “Active Spaces” programme.

3. Main report

- 3.1 Parks are important public health solutions in urban communities. Research evidence confirms that nearby parks, gardens, and other green spaces support human health and wellness. Active living opportunities that reduce the likelihood of obesity and chronic diseases (such as diabetes, heart disease and respiratory problems) are particularly improved where people can enjoy walking, cycling, play, and other physical recreation in their local park or green space.
- 3.2 Fields in Trust’s Active Spaces programme aims to secure the protection of parks and green spaces across the UK and increase participation in many different physical activities within these. It focuses on funding projects that inspire the most inactive communities to get active in their local parks and green spaces.

- 3.3 Working in partnership with the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust, the Council has secured Active Spaces funding from Fields in Trust to run a series of exercise and recreational activities in West Pilton Park, and has been invited to submit an additional funding application for similar activities in Little France Park, Craigmillar. However, this and future Fields in Trust funding for park activities is dependent upon them receiving protection through a Minute of Agreement between landowner (the Council) and funder (Fields in Trust).
- 3.4 West Pilton Park and Little France Park are both situated in deprived areas that have high levels of obesity and ill-health as reflected in the latest Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation figures. Active Spaces funding will therefore be used to run a programme of outdoor fitness activities aimed at families and single parents. Healthy lifestyle development officers, who are specialist fitness trainers and have experience in working with families and young people, will organise a series of exercise activities and taster sessions, including boxercise, green gym, and gentle keep fit in both parks.
- 3.5 West Pilton Park is situated in Pilton, and is also close to Muirhouse. Spread over two levels, the upper level has three children's play areas for toddlers, juniors, and teens. The lower section is a large grassy open space which is given over to games and a football pitch. There are four small woodlands located to the edges of the park. An all-weather pitch to the north-east edge of the park is run by the West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre.
- 3.6 Little France Park, between Craigmillar, Bioquarter, and the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, is Edinburgh's latest public park, officially opened by Cllr MacInnes on 28 September 2018. To date, an Active Travel cycle route and linking footpath network has been laid-out across the park. Extensive fly-tipping has been removed, invasive non-native species tackled, diseased trees felled, and boundaries defined and made safe. A management plan is now being drafted, which will identify and programme the next phase of improvement works and engagement activities.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 Being awarded Active Spaces grants to support local communities develop active lifestyles.
- 4.2 The protection of West Pilton Park and Little France Park as valued community green spaces via a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 Internal legal administration costs. These will be met from the Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries revenue budget.

- 5.2 £50,000 of secured Active Spaces grant funding is subject to the completion of Fields in Trust Memoranda of Understanding: £25,000 for Little France Park and £25,000 for West Pilton Park.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

None

7. Equalities impact

None

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Protection of these public parks in perpetuity will realise multiple environmental, social and economic benefits for this and future generations.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 A recent consultation in Pilton seeking views on how to improve West Pilton Park generated 152 responses. Most people wanted more fitness activity sessions, fun days and sports. The Moving Forward report based on a participatory review into physical exercise in North Edinburgh summarised opinion from 170 local people who took part in listening activities, interviews and focus groups to identify the common issues in the area. The process reiterated the need to encourage, support and develop a community led approach to increase physical activity participation in the area.
- 9.2 Building on the extensive community engagement programme delivered in Spring 2018, a community engagement officer is presently discussing future features and activities with residents and other user groups living and working close to Little France Park. Facilitated walks and related activities are now taking place, and further environmental art focussed activities and workshops are planned for Autumn 2018. All of these will help garner opinions to influence future site improvements.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/active-spaces>

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11. Appendices

- Appendix 1 West Pilton Park Location Plan
- Appendix 2 Little France Park Location Plan

West Pilton Park Location Plan



Little France Park location plan

