

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 16 November 2021

Fields in Trust Protected Public Parks and Green Spaces

Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	43, 44

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- 1.1.1 Supports the execution of a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust for a further twenty-five public parks and green spaces, thereby protecting these as recreational open spaces for current and future generations; and
 - 1.1.2 Notes that, if Committee supports the Minute of Agreement, officers will process the Minute of Agreement subject to the appropriateness of title restrictions.

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Fields in Trust Protected Public Parks and Green Spaces

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The City of Edinburgh Council has an opportunity to strengthen its commitment to protect and improve its public parks by supporting the creation of a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust for a further 25 parks and green spaces. If approved, this will bring the total number of Edinburgh parks and green spaces protected through this mechanism to 61, serving communities who do not already have a safeguarded space close to home and ensuring that almost everyone in the city lives no more than a ten-minute walk from a park or green space which is protected for good. In making this commitment, the City of Edinburgh Council will become the first local authority in Scotland to adopt such a bold vision for their public green spaces.

3. Background

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 To date, the City of Edinburgh has registered 34 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: three King George V Memorial Parks (1930s-1950s); three Millennium Fields (2000); a Golden Jubilee Field (2002); twenty four Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Fields (2011); a Centenary Field (2014); and two Active Spaces (2019). In addition, Minutes of Agreement for Redhall Park and Wardie Playing Fields are currently being drafted.
- 3.3 In his role as President of Fields in Trust, HRH The Duke of Cambridge, accompanied by HRH The Duchess of Cambridge, visited Starbank Park on 27 May 2021 to meet park volunteers, users and officers and to launch Fields in Trust's Greenspace Index (its annual barometer of publicly accessible local park and green space provision). First launched in 2019, this third release highlights the inequities

in green space provision across Britain, noting that despite their indisputable value for health, wellbeing, community and environment, some parts of the nation only have access to half the green space as others, and that areas with the least provision tend to be those with a higher incidence of deprivation.

- 3.4 The event also provided the opportunity for Edinburgh's Lord Provost to announce that the City of Edinburgh Council would seek to ensure that almost everyone in the city lives no more than a ten-minute walk from a green space which is legally protected in perpetuity, ensuring that for years to come citizens are guaranteed a lifetime of opportunity for activity, play, learning, recuperation and community.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Public parks and green spaces are proven to help people stay physically and mentally well; places where we can all move, breathe, run and play. They are an important tool to drive social cohesion, combat loneliness and build community.
- 4.2 Fields in Trust works in partnership with landowners to protect land through a Minute of Agreement, a legal commitment with the landowner which secures spaces in perpetuity for current and future generations to enjoy.
- 4.3 Using a ten-minute walk buffer as an accepted proxy for the 20 minute neighbourhood concept, officers have determined that currently 69% of the population of Edinburgh has a park or green space within a ten-minute walk that is protected in partnership with Fields in Trust. This can be increased to 92% by protecting an additional 25 specific spaces.
- 4.4 The 25 identified parks and green spaces are:
- 4.4.1 Baronscourt Park;
 - 4.4.2 Bloomiehall Park;
 - 4.4.3 Buckstone Park and Woods;
 - 4.4.4 Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park;
 - 4.4.5 Buttercup Farm Park;
 - 4.4.6 Cammo Estate Park;
 - 4.4.7 Cramond Walled Garden;
 - 4.4.8 East Pilton Park;
 - 4.4.9 Fairmilehead Park;
 - 4.4.10 Gyle Park;
 - 4.4.11 Haugh Park;
 - 4.4.12 Jewel Park;
 - 4.4.13 Joppa Quarry Park;
 - 4.4.14 Kirkbrae Playing Fields;

- 4.4.15 Moredun Park;
- 4.4.16 Muirhouse Park;
- 4.4.17 Newcraighall Park;
- 4.4.18 Parkside Park (Newbridge);
- 4.4.19 Pikes Pool (Kirkliston);
- 4.4.20 Princes Street Gardens;
- 4.4.21 Ratho Park (Ratho);
- 4.4.22 Roseburn Park;
- 4.4.23 Seafield Recreation Ground;
- 4.4.24 Sighthill Park; and
- 4.4.25 Spylaw Park.

- 4.5 In addition to the mechanism of protection afforded by Fields in Trust, all planning applications that would result in a loss of open space (regardless of whether they are covered by Fields in Trust or not) must be assessed against applicable Local Development Plan (LDP) policy: 'Open Space Protection' (Policy Env 18) as well as any other applicable LDP policies. Presently, Edinburgh is in the process of producing its next LDP - City Plan 2030 - and this also contains a corresponding open space policy called 'Protection of Open Space' (Env 23). City Plan 2030 was recently approved by the Planning Committee on [29 September 2021](#) and will shortly be subject to public consultation ahead of submission to the Scottish Government for Examination.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee agree to the introduction of Minutes of Agreement with Fields in Trust for the parks and greenspaces outlined in paragraph 4.4, officers will:
- 5.1.1 Initiate title searches and site record investigations to ascertain suitability for including proposed parks and green spaces within a Memorandum of Agreement;
 - 5.1.2 Initiate a public consultation exercise for those identified for inclusion within a Memorandum of Agreement; and
 - 5.1.3 Process a Memorandum of Agreement with Fields in Trust.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The costs of legal administration will be met from the Parks and Greenspace revenue budget.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The protection in perpetuity of parks and green spaces will have a positive impact for communities and green space users, with almost all of Edinburgh's residents being within a ten-minute walk of their nearest Fields in Trust supported green space.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Fields in Trust Protection](#)
- 8.2 [Green Space Index](#)

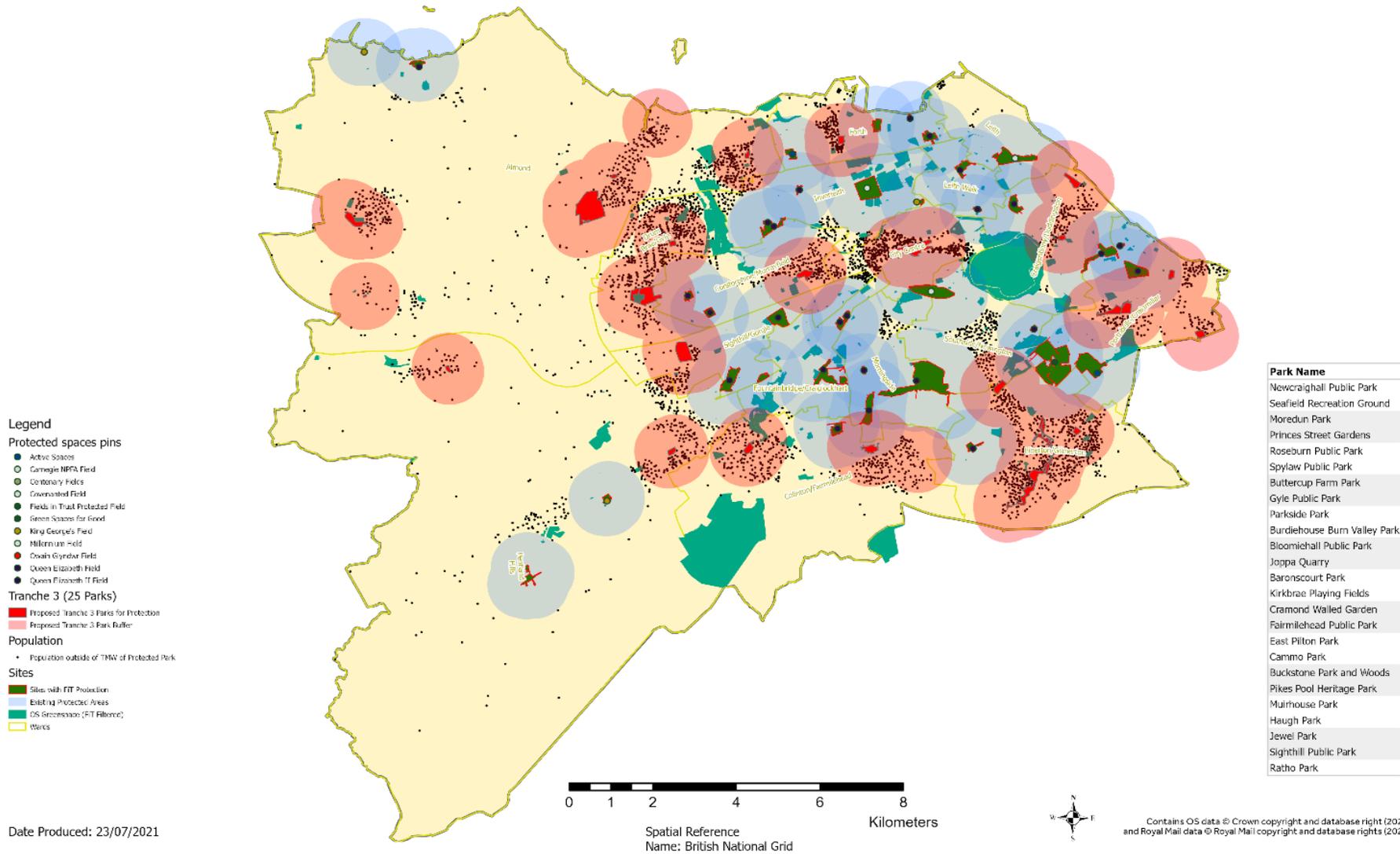
9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Proposed Protections Map.

Appendix 1 – Proposed Protections Map



Reference map of green space and Fields in Trust proposed protections within the City of Edinburgh



Date Produced: 23/07/2021