

Culture and Communities Committee

10am, Tuesday, 15 September 2020

Fields in Trust Minute of Agreement for Marchbank Park

Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	Pentland Hills
Council Commitments	43.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee is asked to support the execution of a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust to protect Marchbank Park as recreational open spaces for current and future generations.

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Report

Fields in Trust Minute of Agreement for Marchbank Park

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report fulfils the Motion by Councillor Gardiner seeking information to enable Elected Members to consider pursuing a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the Council meeting of [28 July 2020](#), a Motion by Councillor Gardiner requested that officers bring forward a report for Elected Members to consider 'Fields of Trust' status for Marchbank Park in Balerno to the Policy and Sustainability Committee, in two cycles. Noting that implementing 'Fields of Trust status for Marchbank Park has the support of both Balerno Community Council and Balerno Village Trust.
- 3.2 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 any development could take place.
- 3.3 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), 24 Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Fields (2011), a Centenary Field (2014), and two Green Spaces for Good (2018).

4. Main report

- 4.1 Marchbank Park, also known as the Bell's Field, is a 5.9 hectare community park located in the centre of Balerno's main housing area. The land is owned by the Council and has been maintained as an open space area since the development of the surrounding Bell's Estate. The park is dissected by a series of footpaths to adjacent streets and incorporates amenity grassland, biodiversity grassland, a children's play park, single trees and tree groups, including a line of mature beech trees that marks the former presence of an agricultural shelter belt.

- 4.2 Areas of ground making up the present-day park were acquired from Bellway (Builders) Limited in 1984 and a further deed was registered in 1993. The Council's title does not contain an obstacle to the nomination as a Field in Trust.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee supports the execution, a Minute of Agreement with Fields in Trust for Marchbank Park will be progressed. A Fields in Trust representative has already stated that they'd be "delighted to have Marchbank Park join the family of Edinburgh's protected sites".

6. Financial impact

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

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Implementing 'Fields of Trust status for Marchbank Park has the support of both Balerno Community Council and the Balerno Village Trust.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Further information on how Fields in Trust protect outdoor recreational space can be found at <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/knowledge-base/fields-in-trust-protection>

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Marchbank Park location plan

