

City of Edinburgh Council

Friends of Edinburgh Greenspace Information Pack

**Guidelines on setting up and maintaining a Friends of Greenspace
group**

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1. Introduction

This pack has been developed to help guide groups and/or individuals interested in setting up a Friends of Edinburgh Greenspace group. It explains the basic stages of starting up a Friends group, from writing a constitution to promoting your group and its projects. It also provides information that may be of use to existing Friends of Greenspace groups.

What is a Friends of Greenspace Group?

Friends of Greenspace groups play a vital role in protecting and enhancing local parks, woodlands, cemeteries and greenspaces owned by City of Edinburgh Council. Working in partnership with the Council, they give residents a greater say in what goes on in their local greenspace.

What do they do?

The groups volunteer their time and energy to get involved with a huge range of different projects including:

- Fundraising for improvements and events in the park
- Enhancing biodiversity (e.g. creation of wildflower meadows, installing bird and bat boxes)
- Practical tasks like clean-ups, tree planting and improving access
- Contributing to the planning and management of the park or cemetery
- Leading walks and talks
- Gardening
- Producing leaflets and other educational material

It is entirely up to the group what level of activity they undertake. Some may operate at a low level simply distributing information regarding the park, whilst others can be more active, raising funds and organising events.

Friends of Pilrig Park

Founded: February 2013 (Constituted as a voluntary association in October 2013)

Membership: 140 (non paying)

Email: friendsofpilrigpark@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.friendsofpilrigpark.org.uk>



Aim

To promote and improve Pilrig Park by working with the local community, local businesses, City of Edinburgh Council and other partners to make positive changes that benefit the park, the local environment and local communities; to make Pilrig Park a great green space in the city for all to enjoy.

Activities

- Clean Up Days bi-monthly through the summer
- Woodland Clearance Days monthly through the winter
- Money from Leith Decides have been used to run a number of workshops with local schools and a Youth Development Centre to produce posters for an anti-litter campaign
- Working with City of Edinburgh Council to identify priority areas for improvement/maintenance
- Supporting Citizen Curator with the Grow Wild project to promote wildflowers and community engagement in the park

Committee and how it works

Currently nine committee members, which include chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer posts. The Committee meets quarterly and at least four committee members must be present for the meeting to be quorum. Friends of Pilrig Park hold at least two general public meetings a year, one being the AGM. A new Management Committee can be elected at the AGM.

Future Plans:

- We are looking to improve the planting and biodiversity in the park and have had advice from a local Botanist as part of the Grown Wild project.
- We want to work with CEC to improve the paths and entrances into the park.
- We will consult with local residents - emails, public meeting and stall at Leith Gala day - as to the priorities to address next - we have some money inherited from a former residents association to spend on capital investment.

Friends of Cammo Estate

Founded: 1998

Membership: Approximately 200 households

Website: www.facebook.com/friendsofcammo

Email: friendsofcammo@yahoo.co.uk



Aim

To preserve and enhance the amenity of Cammo Estate for the benefit of the public, and to advance the education of the public in the scenic, historical, architectural landscape and ecological qualities of the Estate.

Activities

- Environmental improvements-areas of wildflowers, tree and hedgerow planting, maintaining pinetum and litter picks
- Annual barbeque
- Liaise with Natural Heritage Officer- past projects have included commissioning interpretation panels and laying a hedge.
- Develop ideas for future projects and seek grant funding where needed
- Inform members and comment on development planning matters affecting the Estate.

Committee and how it works

Six people (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Environmental Projects, Membership and Newsletter, Events) meet quarterly, one month before quarterly general meetings. This group can take decisions, but we mostly report to general meetings. We also have subcommittees (comprising committee members and others) for more detailed planning and oversight of events and environmental projects.

Future plans

Future projects include more interpretation panels, introduction of bee hives and more hedgerow planting. We will also continue to liaise with the Natural Heritage Service, including prioritising activities in the management plan and other desired improvements.

2. Setting up a Friends Group

Contacting City of Edinburgh Council

Your local Parks & Greenspace Officer, Natural Heritage Officer or Cemetery Team Leader will be the first point of contact for issues relating to the day to day management of your park or cemetery and they need to be fully informed of all your activities. Please contact them if you are planning to set up a Friends group or if you have any issues relating to your site.

- **North West** Ritchie Fraser (0131 529 5050) ritchie.fraser@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **South East** Mike Shields (0131 529 5151) mike.shields@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **North East** Scott Thomson (0131 529 3111) scott.thomson@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **South West** Craig Dunlop (0131 527 3800) craig.dunlop@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **Natural Heritage Sites** (0131 529 2401) naturalheritageservice@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **Cemetery Team Leader** (0131 664 4314) gareth.edwards@edinburgh.gov.uk

The co-ordination of Friends of Edinburgh Greenspace groups is managed centrally by the Senior Programmes Officer in the Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries Service. They administer the programme, provide links to the other Friends groups, distribute information on potential funding bodies, national events, and help with wider publicity, project planning and events.

For general information about setting up a Friends group contact the Parks and Greenspace Service at parks@edinburgh.gov.uk or call 0131 469 57955.

Recruiting members

The first step is to find like-minded people who want to get involved in your local park. This might seem quite daunting but there are a few simple things you can do such as sending out flyers or putting up posters. Personal contact, such as speaking to local people you know and people in your greenspace, is often the most important factor in getting the community involved. A good idea is to have an informal gathering or event in order to attract as many potential friends as possible. Contact

your Parks and Greenspace Officer, Natural Heritage Ranger, Cemetery Team Leader, local Councillors and/or Community Council, as they may know of other people with an interest in the area, from sports teams to local schools, who you should invite.

You can find details of Community Councils on www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils

You could contact another Friends of Greenspace group for advice (see Section 7). They have all been through the process of recruiting members and are more than willing to share experiences and advice.

Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are useful ways of linking to other groups and organisations that may be able to help you.

Setting your aims

In the process of developing your group you will start to get a picture of what the main issues are in your greenspace. If you are not sure what your members and other users want to happen in your greenspace you should investigate further. Most funding bodies will want you to demonstrate that your project/s reflect the wishes of the majority of stakeholders. This can be done in a number of ways, from distributing a questionnaire to holding a public event. A 'walk around' the area with Council staff and group members may be a good opportunity to highlight the key issues that need to be addressed. Once you have determined what the issues are, you should establish what you are going to tackle first, identify who can help you do it and work out how much it will cost.

Registering your group

It is important that you register your group with Parks, Greenspace & Cemeteries within City of Edinburgh Council, by filling in a Friends of Edinburgh Greenspace Registration Form (Appendix 1). This allows us to keep you informed of the Friends networking events that we run, and send you relevant information on grants, training events and site visits.

Working together

The majority of open space in Edinburgh falls under the management of the City of Edinburgh Council. It is important that the ideas and goals of the Friends group work in partnership with our existing Edinburgh Parks and Gardens Strategy and Green Flag Award / Park Quality Assessments. This will ensure the group's objectives are not in conflict with the aims of the Council and help develop a strong partnership approach to managing the greenspace.

Friends groups represent the community and should work to ensure that their aims are in the best interest of the area and its users. This will mean working with other groups and organisations to deliver activities, events and projects. In the event that more than one group registers for a particular site, the Council will advise that groups work together.

Your Parks and Greenspace Officer, Natural Heritage or Cemeteries Officer will be able to help you with linking to the Parks and Gardens Strategy, as well as providing help with working with other parks users.

3. Structuring Your Group

There are three main options for structuring your group:

1. **Non-Formal.** This means that you remain an informal community group and therefore you won't have to elect committee members or hold formal AGMs. However, you will still have to register as a Friends group with the Council and may not have as much access to funding opportunities as more formal groups.
2. **Constituted group.** Although not a prerequisite for establishing a Friends group the next step could be to make your group more formal by setting up a committee and putting together a constitution. This is certainly required if your group is to apply for funding from the Council and most other organisations.
3. **Charitable Status.** An organisation with charitable status is eligible to apply to a broader range of grant giving organisations and can receive a range of

tax benefits on some kinds of donations. This makes fundraising much easier. However, organisations with charitable status must produce audited financial accounts each year and send them to the [Office of Scottish Charity Regulation](http://www.oscr.org.uk) (www.oscr.org.uk). Also they may only spend money on furthering their charitable purposes (or on making investments that give a good return). The HMRC website gives step by step instructions and contains the necessary forms:

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/tax/recognition.htm>

You can find information on becoming a registered Scottish Charity on <http://www.oscr.org.uk/about-scottish-charities/becoming-a-charity/>

If you require further support with these stages, the **Edinburgh Voluntary Organisation's Council** (EVOC) is a valuable source of information and will help guide a new group through the process of becoming constituted. They can be contacted on 0131 555 9100, or you can view their website on www.evoc.org.uk

Choosing a constitution

A constitution explains how your group will be managed, from your aims and objectives to how your meetings will be run. It helps make sure all members are treated equally and grant giving organisations will usually require groups to have a written constitution before they can apply for money. There is a sample constitution in Appendix 2 to help get you started. EVOC (www.evoc.org.uk) can provide further guidance. You will need to formally adopt the constitution at your first AGM (i.e. everyone agrees they are happy with it). At least two members of the committee should sign and date it, and there should be a record kept of this.

Setting up a Committee

The committee helps with the running of the group. The constitution you have adopted will provide details of what responsibilities the committee has, how many committee members there are, etc. Usually there will be 3 office bearers (Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary) and approximately 5 committee members:

- The Chairperson acts as the leader of the group and is usually the main contact with the Local Authority. They lead meetings and ensure there is smooth running of the group.
- The Secretary ensures all group members are kept informed of what the group is doing. They write agendas for meetings and take the minutes.
- The Treasurer takes care of the financial affairs of the group. It's good practice to have a term of office for office-bearers (1-3 years), especially the Chair.
- It's also a good idea to have a 'Vice Chair' who can be trained up to fill the Chair position when the Chair has served their term or represent the Chair when he/she is unable to be present.
- General committee members assist with particular projects and support the elected officers with their roles. Committee members can also have their own areas of responsibility, for example communications or schools liaison.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

You will need to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to adopt your constitution and approve your committee. Thereafter an AGM should be held once a year in order to elect or re-elect committee members and present an annual report and accounts to the rest of the group's members. The number of other meetings you hold is up to the group. All meetings held by your group should have an agenda, indicating what issues will be included in your meeting. Minutes should be taken at every meeting to keep a record of what was discussed. They don't have to be a complete copy of everything that is said; they should reflect the major themes that were discussed and include any action points marked against a name. Minutes should also record the names of the people who attended and any apologies sent by those who couldn't attend the meeting. Please include your Parks & Greenspace, Natural Heritage or Cemeteries Officer in the circulation of your minutes.

Set up a bank account

Finally, after your first AGM, you will need to set up a bank account to manage any money the group generates from fund raising (e.g. membership fees, grants or events). The account should be set up in the name of the group. There should be at

least two signatories for the account, and they should be members of the committee (usually the Chair and Treasurer). Several banks operate Treasurer's Accounts, tailored for small groups. Ask for an explanatory leaflet, which will guide you through the process.

4. Insurance and Risk Assessments

If your group intends to carry out practical tasks or hold events then you will need insurance – usually public liability insurance (to cover accidents to the public on site) and personal accident insurance (to provide compensation for your volunteers).

The status of your group, or how you have structured it, does not affect your requirements to obtain insurance.

The Council's Public Liability Insurance Policy

There will be some circumstances where the Council's own public liability insurance policy will cover volunteers (either as an individual or as part of a group). It is likely that the Council's own public liability insurance will cover Friends groups if:

- Friends are assisting the Council with a Council activity
- Friends are authorised by the Council to carry out the particular activity
- A Council employee is present to supervise the particular activity.

The following list provides examples of practical tasks that Friends groups may be able to assist the Council with:

- Litter picking
- Feathering of trees
- Planting and sowing of wildflower
- Preparing wildflower sites
- Edging along pathways
- Weeding
- Cutting back of shrubs
- Painting of buildings and fences

- Cleaning weed around benches
- Burn Clearing
- Cutting back gorse
- Monitoring and reporting giant hogweed for spraying
- Pulling up Himalayan balsam
- Monitoring and reporting Japanese knotweed for spraying
- Pulling up willowherb and ragwort
- Planting
- Thinning of trees and crown lifting
- Installing hay bails
- Cutting back and clearing vegetation
- Minor repairs to walls
- Minor repairs to fences
- Paths - dealing with scraping, repairing, edging and drainage
- Replacement of slats on bridges, steps and handrails
- Seats and benches - painting, graffiti removal, repairing
- Burn and pond clean ups
- Sweeping of sites for litter
- Building and installation of bat and bird boxes
- Recording biodiversity (butterflies and otters)

These activities need to be authorised with the Council through your Parks & Greenspace, Natural Heritage or Cemeteries Officer, who **must** be fully informed of your plans in writing or via email. These activities are also subject to site specific risk assessments to ensure that standards are being met, tasks are matched to the capabilities of those involved and the public are not put at an increased risk. You must contact your Parks & Greenspace, Natural Heritage or Cemeteries Officer in advance of any activities being carried out to agree a risk assessment for your activities.

TCV Scotland (www.tcv.org/scotland) and Scotland's Rural College (www.sruc.ac.uk) offer training on many of these practical tasks.

Which activities are not covered by the Council's policy?

Activities run by Friends groups that will not be covered by the Council's policy include:

- Practical tasks and activities that the Council has not authorised; and
- Practical tasks and activities that the Council has authorised but are not run for the purpose of assisting the Council with its functions. Examples include fun days, picnics or guided walks.

In addition, the Council will not sanction or give permission to Friends groups for the use of machinery such as chainsaws or diggers. This work is not permitted and will only be carried out by Council staff or contractors appointed by the Council.

Recommendations

- Friends should get independent insurance advice on the appropriate cover for their needs. Friends should not rely on the Council's own policy, as it will only cover volunteers in some circumstances
- Friends should read the Council's Understanding Insurance and Risk Management guidance. This provides contact details of voluntary sector organisations, some of which have links to insurers and brokers, and provides responses to frequently asked questions relating to insurance.
- Your Parks & Greenspace Officer, Natural Heritage or Cemeteries Officer should be fully informed of your activities.

Risk Assessments

To comply with Health and Safety laws your group should carry out risk assessments, put measures in place to help prevent accidents and then record any accidents as they occur. Risk assessments should be carried out prior to an event (including practical tasks and activities). This involves: looking for the hazards (e.g. using tools), deciding who might be harmed and how, and recording the findings of your assessment (e.g. the main risks and the measures you have taken to deal with them).

Your Parks & Greenspace Officer, Natural Heritage or Cemeteries Officer will be able to offer appropriate guidance and support on risk management and health and safety to ensure that all volunteers have a safe and enjoyable experience.

- The **Health and Safety Executive** (www.hse.gov.uk) has information and resources on all aspects of Health and Safety, including risk assessment templates which can be downloaded.
- The **Volunteer Centre Edinburgh** (www.volunteeredinburgh.org.uk) provides excellent advice on health and safety and risk assessments complete with examples of policies that other organisations use.
- **TCV Scotland** (www.tcv.org.uk) offer risk assessment and health and safety courses.

5. Getting Your Message Across

You should tell as many people as possible about any events you are arranging or projects you are running. Good publicity will benefit your group by raising awareness of your work, getting your message across and gaining new members. There are a number of ways you can do this.

Posters and flyers

A simple poster can be put up in parks notice boards, schools, local shops, pubs, libraries and community centres. This will help to get people to the event. You could also make smaller flyers or leaflets and distribute them on shop counters or by hand – people often respond well to a personal touch. You could run a competition with your local school to design a poster for you and ask your local shop to photocopy posters and leaflets for you.

Email database

Set up a secure Data Base of members' email addresses. This is a very quick tool to disseminate information and to attach newsletters, thus saving on stationery and delivery. When you send a group email, you should use the blind carbon copy (Bcc)

facility, so that an individual's email address is hidden from the other people receiving the email.

Newsletters

These are a great way of informing your members and the wider community of what your group is up to; celebrating successful events, promoting upcoming activities and recruiting new members.

Websites

A number of the Friends groups in Edinburgh have set up their own web sites (see Section 6) which provide information about the group, a history of the park and a list of the activities they are involved with. It is also useful to upload minutes of your meetings to your website, so all members of the public can view them.

There are several websites available to help you build your own website free of charge:

www.yola.com

www.wordpress.com

www.weebly.com

www.btck.co.uk

Social Media

Several Friends groups also use [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). These are free, easy to use and a good way of communicating with a wide audience. They can be used for sharing photos, connecting with other groups or relevant organisations and updating parks users on any events or activities.

Facebook is the world's most popular social networking site with over one billion active users. It allows you to connect with your audience through posting messages, photographs, videos and links to other websites, while also acting as a forum for online discussion.

Twitter is a form of micro blogging which allows you to post messages (tweets) to your audience using a limited, set number of characters. Twitter allows your followers to keep up with what you are doing, and is particularly useful if you have regular updates to a fast changing situation. Keeping a twitter account current can be time consuming - you must be sure it's the right online tool for you.

Facebook tips

- Make media-rich posts with links in the description, rather than purely pasting links. E.g. photographs, galleries, videos, audio clips.
- Look out for photo opportunities which will get people chatting - funny, quirky, newsworthy or interesting pictures.
- If you want to share a gallery on another website, post a link to the gallery accompanied by the best photograph from the gallery.
- Ensure you have rights to the pictures you are posting - either by using our own, obtaining consent or searching for images on [Creative Commons](#).
- Involve other organisations by tagging them in posts, posting on their wall and commenting on and liking their content.
- Encourage users to get involved by submitting their own photographs and ideas. When seeking pictures from the community, ensure you state in terms that you will have the right to publish the photo on social media.
- Start conversations with the public by using a conversational tone, both on status updates, photo captions and in response to comments.
- Be part of the conversation by thanking people, addressing complaints, answering questions and providing more information.
- Prompt engagement by asking questions (studies have found that questions in status updates can result in 15% more engagement) Questions work best at the end of a status update.
- Use polls to encourage engagement by those who don't want to comment.
- Post full links, not using a URL shortener - it has been found that Facebook users are less likely to engage with shortened links.
- Include keywords relating to the topic of the post - Facebook's algorithm means users are more likely to see updates in their feed that are related to topics they've shown an interest in.

- Engage through other social networks - Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, community blogs - and link back to the Facebook page.
- The best time to post to Facebook varies but it is best to keep it consistent. Don't post too much or too little - around 3 times a day.
- Be aware that keeping Facebook up to date and engaging can be time consuming

Twitter

Twitter is a tool for engaging so works well to build conversations and relationships with other groups and members of the public. It's also a great way to broadcast a message, as well as keeping up with news and what other people have to say.

Compared to Facebook, Twitter is open, so anyone will be able to see everything you tweet, unless you protect your tweets by letting only approved followers see them or send a direct message.

Twitter tips

- Be conversational. Use a conversational but polite tone, answer questions and thank people for comments, unless specified not to.
- Tweet regularly, at least a few times a day.
- Mention others in tweets using their username (@...) where relevant and attribute them as sources where necessary.
- Retweet others. RT means retweet, while MT means 'modified tweet', where a tweet has been retweeted but modified, e.g. shortened. HT means 'hat tip', which acknowledges the person who originally shared content you have shared, e.g. a link to a video.
- Post links, not just to your own website but to other relevant organisations and groups.
- Use hashtags, where necessary. Create your own when beginning a discussion or join in on another discussion by using their hashtag.
- Follow others. Following relevant accounts will encourage them to follow back, leading to more engagement and reach.

- Make Twitter lists. This will allow you to group similar users together in a feed like 'great bloggers', meaning you can filter content.

Edinburgh Outdoors

www.edinburghoutdoors.org.uk can also be used to promote your park and activities. Events can be added to the What's On section and you can add your own photos to individual park entries. You can also provide information on history, geology, wildlife and heritage of your park for each entry.

Edinburgh Outdoors also has associated Twitter and Facebook accounts, which can also be used to share photos and promote your activities. To interact, follow @EdinOutdoors on Twitter or search for 'Edinburgh Outdoors' on Facebook.

Please contact parks@edinburgh.gov.uk if you have any content you would like added to Edinburgh Outdoors.

Local media

Often the best way of informing people of your event is through your local newspaper, radio or television. Papers often have 'What's On' columns that advertise details of events from small groups. You should contact the news desk at least one or two weeks before the event (or earlier if the publication is a 'monthly') so that they can put the date in their diary. Then contact them the day before the publication goes to press to ensure they have remembered your event.

Things that you need to tell the media:

- What's happening at the event
- When the event is taking place
- Where it is taking place
- Who is taking part
- Why is it happening
- How it will affect local people

This information can be all put together in a press release (Appendix 3). An unusual event, celebrity participation, a good photo opportunity, or a news story is more likely to be used by the media. Sometimes the press will send a photographer and/or a reporter but this can't be guaranteed. If no media attends you can send them a concise description of what happened (e.g. how many people took part and what was achieved), along with photos taken before, during and after the event. Most local newspapers will accept your photographs if they are of a good quality. A few however, such as the Edinburgh Evening News, will only use photographs taken by their own photographers.

6. Events

Events are a great way to get people involved with your greenspace and celebrate your successes. There are lots of things which you may consider; from community clean-ups, to gala days, nest box building, walking groups, picnics etc. You could link your event with national events such as [Love Parks Week](#), [International Dawn Chorus Day](#), Clean Up Scotland or Tell a Story Day.

Applications to hold events

If you are planning to hold an event within a park you will need to complete a Parks, Greenspace & Cemeteries events application form. To obtain a form you should either email parkevents@edinburgh.gov.uk or phone 0131 529 7921. Your Parks & Greenspace Officer will be able to tell you whether you need to do this.

Other things to consider when holding events are:

- Insurance, health and safety and risk assessments.
- Identify a First Aider for the event.
- Make sure all children are accompanied by adults.
- All participants should wash their hands thoroughly before eating or drinking.
- Appoint an event co-ordinator who will know the emergency procedures and who accidents should be reported to.

- At the start of an event make sure volunteers are made aware of how to handle tools / equipment properly and of the potential risks associated with the work they will be doing.
- Take care to protect wildlife if working in the countryside, parks, woodland or open spaces.

- The Council has produced a useful guide on the important things you need to be aware of when planning an event in the city, either visit [Events Edinburgh](#) on the Council website (www.edinburgh.gov.uk) or call 0131 529 7955.
- For information about **licensing**, fees and license application forms visit the Edinburgh Licensing Section on the Council website (<http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licensing>) or call 0131 529 4208.

7. Getting Help from your Friends

Edinburgh has a number of Friends groups looking after parks and greenspaces.

The Friends of Parks Forum is run by Friends groups for Friends groups. This involves quarterly meetings to share experiences, discuss common issues and exchange ideas about projects with other Friends groups. If you would like to attend the next Forum meeting, please email edinburghfriendsforum@gmail.com to find out more details.

The Friends of Parks groups are:

- Friends of Blinkbonny Park
- Friends of Bothwell Street Gardens
- Friends of Braidburn Valley Park (www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk)
- Friends of the Braid Hills (www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTheBraidHills)
- Friends of Burdiehouse Burn (www.burdiehousefriends.org)

- Friends of Buckstone Park & Woods
(www.facebook.com/buckstoneparksandwoods)
- Friends of Cammo (www.facebook.com/Friends.of.Cammo)
- Friends of Clermiston Park
- Colinton Mains Park
- Friends of Corstorphine Hill (www.corstorphinehill.org.uk)
- Friends of Craigpark Crescent
- Friends of Curriemuirend Park (www.curriemuirend.co.uk)
- Friends of Davidsons Mains Park
(www.dmsa.org.uk/FriendsofDavidsonsMainsPark)
- Friends of Donkey Field Orchard
- Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill (www.craiglockhartwoods.org)
- Friends of Fairmilehead Park
- Friends of Ferry Glen (www.ferryglen.org.uk)
- Friends of Figgate Park (www.figgatepark.org.uk)
- Friends of Gardeners Crescent (www.friendsofgardnerscrescent.org.uk)
- Granton Castle Walled Garden
(www.grantoncastlewalledgarden.wordpress.com)
- Friends of Gyle Park
- Friends of Hailes Orchard and Woodland
- Friends of Harrison Park (www.harrisonpark.org.uk)
- Friends of Hermitage and Blackford Hill (www.fohb.org/)
- Friends of Hillside and Calton Area (www.inspiringhillside.org.uk)

- Friends of Hopetoun Crescent Gdns (www.hopetouncrescentgarden.org.uk/)
- Friends of Inch Park (www.foip.weebly.com)
- Friends of Inverleith Park (www.inverleithpark.co.uk/)
- Friends of King George V Park & Scotland Yard Parks (www.kgvsy.org.uk)
- Friends of King George V Park (South Queensferry)
- Friends of Linear Park
- Friends of Lochend Park
- Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links (www.fombl.org.uk)
- Friends of Montgomery Street Park (www.montgomerystreetpark.org.uk)
- Friends of Morningside Park and Cemetery
- Friends of Muirwood Park (<http://www.fmwp.btck.co.uk/>)
- Friends of Newhaven Heritage Community Garden
- Friends of the Pentlands (www.pentlandfriends.plus.com)
- Friends of Pikes Pool (www.pikespool.co.uk)
- Friends of Pilrig Park (www.friendsofpilrigpark.org.uk/)
- Friends of Portobello Parks and Beach
- Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods
- Friends of the River Almond Walkway
(www.friendsoftheriveralmondwalkway.org.uk/)
- Friends of Rocheid Path
- Friends of Roseburn Park (www.friendsofroseburnpark.org.uk)
- Friends of Rosefield and Brighton Parks

- Friends of Saughton Park
- Friends of Seven Acre Park
- Friends of St Katharines Park
- Friends of Starbank Park (www.friendsofstarbankpark.org)
- Friends of Victoria Park
- Friends of Warriston Cemetery Woodland LBS
- Friends of West Pilton Park
- Friends of West Port Garden
- Friends of Wester Craiglockhart Hill and Greenbank Woodland

If you want to contact any of these groups either visit their website (if they have one) or contact the Parks and Greenspace Service by emailing parks@edinburgh.gov.uk.

8. Fundraising

In the majority of cases your group will need to raise some funds to help run the group and carry out projects in the park. Some groups ask for a small membership fee to cover basic administration costs. Others run fund raising events, e.g. plant sales, to raise money. By building positive relationships with local organisations you may be able to get some of the things you need for free. For example, perhaps you could persuade a local café to provide volunteers with free refreshments after a clean-up event.

City of Edinburgh Council has a Community Funding Support Programme, which involves regular 'Meet the Funders' events, How to Apply for a Grant workshops, external funding newsflashes and the Community Grants Fund. To find out about upcoming events, or to apply for funding, please visit the neighbourhood partnership website:

<http://edinburghnp.org.uk/about-nps/funding/community-grants-fund/>

In most cases you will need to apply for a grant from a funding body to carry out a specific project. [Greenspace Scotland](http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk) (www.greenspacescotland.org.uk) has a very good section on their website, where they list organisations who will fund community projects in Scotland.

There is also a database of funding opportunities and support available on <http://www.open4community.info/edinburgh/>

[MyParkScotland](http://www.mypark.scot) (www.mypark.scot) is a crowdfunding website, where Friends of Parks groups can submit projects and ask for funding from members of the public. You can also add details of your activities and events to help promote your group.

When applying for funding there are some simple points that you should bear in mind.

Do you know what type of projects the funding bodies will give grants for?

It is really important that the funding body you apply to is willing to give funds for projects similar to yours. Make a list of the funding body's aims and objectives and make statements about how your project will reach these aims and objectives.

How can you prove that there is a need for your project and that it addresses the concerns of local residents?

Work to involve your local community in decision making and keep a record of how many people you have spoken to and what they say. Surveys are an excellent way to get information from local people and to prove to funding bodies your plans represent the needs of the local community.

Have you been realistic about the costs of a project?

When potential funders assess your application they will check that your budget gives an accurate estimate of the costs of a project. For example, do not be afraid to include costs of telephone, internet, or postage. Some funders may ask you to get two quotes from different suppliers for large purchases. You should include information on match-funding, including an estimate of the financial value of any 'in-kind' support. If you can show that you are getting support from other places you will be more likely to get funding.

What will happen when the project is finished?

Don't forget to establish what will happen when the project is over. You need to show funders that you have made plans for what will happen when the money runs out. For example, if your group wanted money to plant trees then you would need to show who will water and prune them after they have been planted.

Do you know when you will receive a decision on your funding application?

Some small grants schemes often respond quickly, but in some cases, you may still need to wait six months or more for an answer.

If at first you don't succeed, try, and try again

If you are not successful on your first attempt to get a grant don't give up. Ask the funding body why you weren't successful, and use their suggestions to develop future bids. Try and get a copy of an application which was successful, as this will help show you what kind of things they are after. Other Friends groups may have already been successful applying to the same funding body – ask them for advice. Finally, don't be too extravagant with your first bid; it is better to apply for smaller amounts as their application forms are usually simpler. This will help build your confidence.

9. Useful Contacts

Topic	Who	What they do	Contact details
Friends Forum	John Kerr (Chairman)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meet other Friends Groups to discuss common issues, share experience, advice and new initiatives	edinburghfriendsforum@gmail.com
Access	Martin Duncan Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advice on access rights and responsibilities in relation to the Outdoor Access legislation and Scottish Outdoor Access Code	martin.duncan@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 2416
Allotments	Ian Woolard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Manages Edinburgh's Council owned allotments	ian.woolard@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 7916

	Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on allotment availability 	
Biodiversity	Caroline Peacock, Biodiversity Officer City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on biodiversity issues 	biodiversity@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 469 3920
Cemeteries	Gareth Edwards Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and maintain 40 cemeteries and churchyards in Edinburgh 	Gareth.Edwards@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 664 4314
Charitable status	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on setting up a charity in Scotland Registers new charities in Scotland 	www.oscr.org.uk 01382 220446
Contractors (help with practical projects)	The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance for voluntary groups To help with a variety of practical projects (tree and bulb planting, path building, creation of community gardens etc). Training courses 	edinburgh@tcv.org.uk www.tcv.org.uk/scotland

Topic	Who	What they do	Contact details
	Dirty Weekenders Edinburgh University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not for profit group who can provide assistance with practical projects 	www.dirty.eusa.ed.ac.uk
	The Green Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers (14-25 year olds) to help with project identification and planning. Conservation work including path building and habitat management. 	info@greenteam.org.uk 0131 337 7227
	Lothian Conservation Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out practical conservation projects in Edinburgh and the surrounding area. 	www.lcv.org.uk enquiries@lcv.org.uk
Community Councils	Community Council Liaison Officer, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary groups of people who have a genuine interest in the well being of their community. 	community.councils@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 469 3838
Parks & Greenspace Officers	Place, Locality based, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice on horticulture and biodiversity Management of parks and amenity areas in Edinburgh. 	SE: Mike Shields 0131 529 5151 NE: Scott Thomson 0131 529 3111 SW: Craig Dunlop 0131 527 3800 NW: Ritchie Fraser 0131 529 5050
Local Councillor	City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent their ward constituents in the Council. 	www.edinburgh.gov.uk/councillors 0131 200 2323
Natural Heritage Service	Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with community groups to manage Edinburgh's countryside resource. 	naturalheritageservice@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 2401
Disclosures	Disclosure Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information on the Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme for volunteers. Essential for work with young people. 	www.disclosurescotland.co.uk info@disclosurescotland.co.uk 0870 609 6006
	Central Registered Body Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides advice on applying for a disclosure check and joining the PVG scheme. 	www.crbs.org.uk 01786 849 777
Topic	Who	What they do	Contact details
Events	Place City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice on statutory regulations and permissions along with contact details for Council Services necessary to support public events 	parks@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 3180
	Licensing Section, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on license requirements 	licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 4208

	Plan It! Events toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives practical advice on how to plan a community event, with tips on how to plan, promote, deliver and evaluate the event. 	Download from http://www.greenspace.org.uk/plan-it.pdf
Friends of Parks	Sarah Murphy, Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration of groups Networking events and training events 	sarah.murphy@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 7955
Litter and Graffiti	Task Force Managers (Locality Based) Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litter picking Servicing and location of litter bins Provides specialist graffiti removal service 	Phone to find out who the managers are in your area go to http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/2/0017/our_main_offices
	Environmental Wardens (Neighbourhood based) Services for Communities, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deal with abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, litter dropping, fly-posters and fly tipping. 	Phone to find out who the wardens are in your area go to http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/2/0017/our_main_offices
Memorial benches	Sarah Fraser Services for Communities, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on donating a memorial seat or bench. 	sarah.fraser@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 7941
Monuments	Museums and Galleries, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To report damage to monuments 	museumsandgalleries@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 3993
Topic	Who	What they do	Contact details
Relevant National Charities	Greenspace Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered charity working to improve parks and greenspaces in Scotland. Produce monthly bulletin with information on funding, news and events 	www.greenspacescotland.org.uk 01786 465934
	Keep Scotland Beautiful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run various campaigns including National Spring Clean, Dumb Dumpers, Poop Scoop Week 	www.keeptoscotlandbeautiful.org 01786 471333

Play areas	James Galloway Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all information about areas. • To report faulty equipment in play areas or anti-social behaviour. 	James.galloway@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 529 7977
Schools	Eco-Schools in Edinburgh Children and Families, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and information on becoming an eco-school and making links with school groups 	ecoschoolsinedinburgh@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 551 4370
Trees	Forestry Service Place, City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with issues relating to all Council owned trees and woodlands 	Forestry.service@edinburgh.gov.uk 0131 311 7074
	Graham Hinshelwood, Tree Officer City of Edinburgh Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with planning issues relating to trees 	Graham.hinshelwood@edinburg.gov.uk 0131 529 3919
Volunteers and voluntary groups	Edinburgh Volunteer Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support voluntary organisation development and volunteer opportunities within organisations • Provide training to voluntary organisations • Provide examples of health & safety, equal opportunities and child protection policies. 	www.volunteeredinburgh.org.uk 0131 225 0630
Topic	Who	What they do	Contact details
	Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Sector support and coordination. • Manages grant scheme for Edinburgh voluntary groups. <p>Local offices in South Edinburgh and West Edinburgh.</p>	www.evoc.org.uk 0131 555 9100
	The Conservation Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance for community groups • Training courses • On-line handbooks • Community networking 	www.tcv.org.uk edinburgh@tcv.org.uk

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1: Friends of Edinburgh Greenspace Registration Form

NAME OF PARK OR GREENSPACE	
NAME OF GROUP	
DATE FORMED	
APPROX. MEMBERSHIP	
CONTACT NAME (Chair person)	
ADDRESS	
EMAIL	
PHONE NUMBER	

CONTACT NAME (other e.g. secretary)	
ADDRESS	
EMAIL	
PHONE NUMBER	

I agree that the information given above can be given to (*tick as appropriate*):

- Interested members of the local community
- Other Friends groups

Information on relevant events, conferences, grants, training opportunities etc will be circulated via email by the Parks and Greenspace Service (*please tick to confirm*).

- I wish to receive relevant information via email

Your group will automatically be registered with the Edinburgh Green Spaces Forum.

If you do not wish to be registered please tick the box below:

- I do not wish to become a member of the Edinburgh Green Spaces Forum

Please list the main aims and objectives of your group:

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Please answer Yes / No

1. Do you have, or do you intend to have a formal, written constitution? If you do, please supply a copy	
2. Is the group willing to work in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council to seek outside funding for park improvements?	

3. Does the group intend to carry out practical work within the park?*	
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*The City of Edinburgh Council's Public Liability Insurance will only cover activities where volunteers are assisting the Council with its activities and that are sanctioned by the Council. Please see the full guidance in the Friends Information Pack.

Signature of Chair	
Name	
Date	

Please return to: parks@edinburgh.gov.uk or post to: Parks and Greenspace & Cemeteries Service, City of Edinburgh Council, City Chambers, 253 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ.

Appendix 2: Sample Constitution

If you would like to see more sample constitutions please email parks@edinburgh.gov.uk

1. Name

The name of the group shall be Friends of (*insert name of park here*)

2. Aim

To improve the green space generally known as (*insert name of park here*)

3. Objectives

The group will fulfill the aim by:

- ❖ Promoting the health and well-being of the residents of the area and working together as residents regardless of age, ethnic origin, ability, sex, belief or political affiliation recognising the value of our many differences.
- ❖ Involving local people in improving the area.
- ❖ To carry out and promote both environmental improvement and practical conservation, to educate, encourage and support the local population in environmental practice by working with statutory and non statutory agencies.
- ❖ Promoting sport, community recreation and play facilities.
- ❖ To raise funds and receive contributions where appropriate to finance the work.
- ❖ To publicise and promote work.
- ❖ Open bank accounts.
- ❖ Make rules and standing orders for categories of members and their rights.

- ❖ Take out insurance.
- ❖ Organise meetings, training courses and events.
- ❖ Work with similar groups and exchange information and advice with them.
- ❖ Take any action that is lawful, which would help it to fulfil its aims.

4. Membership

- a. Membership of Friends of (*insert Friends Group here*) shall be open to anyone who is interested in helping the group to achieve its aim and willing to abide by the rules of the group.
- b. Every member shall have one vote at general meetings.
- c. The Management Committee shall have the power to refuse membership to an applicant, where it is considered such membership would be detrimental to the aims, purposes or activities of the group.
- d. Registration and termination of membership.
 - ❖ Any member of the association may resign his/her membership and any representative terminate or suspend the membership of any members, if in its opinion his/her conduct is prejudicial to the interests and objects of the association, PROVIDED THAT the individual member or representative of the member organisation (as the case may be) shall have the right to be heard by the General Committee before the final decision is made. There shall be a right of appeal to an independent arbitrator appointed by mutual agreement.

5. Management Committee

- a. Friends of (*insert Friends Group here*) shall be administered by a Management Committee of not less than three people and not more

than fifteen members elected at the group's Annual General Meeting, Committee Members must be at least 18 years old.

- b. The officers of the management Committee shall be:

The Chairperson

The Treasurer

The Secretary

And such other officers of the group shall deem necessary at the Meeting.

- c. The Management Committee shall meet at least twice a year.
- d. At least five Management Committee Members must be present for the Management Committee meeting to take place.
- e. Voting at Management Committee meetings shall be by show of hands on a majority basis. If there is a tied vote then the chairperson shall have a second vote.
- f. Power to set up sub-groups and work parties as deemed necessary who shall be accountable to the committee

6. Finance

- a. Any money obtained by the group shall be used only for the group
- b. Any bank accounts opened for the group shall be in the name of the group.
- c. Any cheque issued shall be signed by at least two of any three nominated signatures.
- d. The Management Committee will ensure that the group stays within the budget.

7. Committee Meetings

- a. The committee shall meet at least two times each year.
- b. The quorum for a meeting shall be five.
- c. The committee shall be accountable for the members at all times.
- d. All meetings must be minuted and available to any interested party.
- e. All committee members shall be given at least seven days notice of a meeting unless it is deemed an emergency meeting.

8. General Public Meetings

- a. The committee shall call at least two general public meetings each year, purpose of these meeting is for the group to account for its actions and consider the regeneration and development of according to the group's objectives.
- b. The Chair of the group shall normally chair these meetings.
- c. At least fourteen days notice of such a meeting must be given and advertised in at least five public places.
- d. All meetings, including AGM's must be minuted and available to any interested party.
- e. The quorum for a General Meeting is five.

9. Annual General Meeting

- a. The Friends of (*insert Friends Group here*) shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at not more than 15 month intervals.
- b. Where possible members shall be notified personally, otherwise notice will be deemed served by advertising the meetings in at least five public places giving at least fourteen days' notice of the AGM.
- c. The business of the AGM shall include:

- ❖ Receiving a report from the Chairperson of the group's activities over the year.
 - ❖ Receiving a report and presentation of the last financial year's accounts from the Treasurer on the finances of the group.
 - ❖ Electing a new Management Committee and considering any other matter as may be appropriate at such a meeting.
- d. The quorum for Annual General Meeting shall be at least eight persons of which no more than four shall be committee members.

10. Alteration of the Constitution

- a. Proposals for amendments to this constitution, or dissolution (see Clause 11) must be delivered to the secretary in writing. The secretary in conjunction with all other officers shall then decide on the date of a forum meeting to discuss such proposals, giving at least four weeks clear notice.
- b. Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by a least two thirds of those members present and voting at any general meeting.

11. Dissolution

The group may be wound up at any time if agreed by two thirds of those members present and voting at any general meeting. Any assets shall be returned to their providers, if they require it, or shall be passed to another group with similar aims.

12. Adoption of the constitution

This constitution was adopted by the members present at the AGM held on:

_____ (Date)

Signed:

_____ (Chair)

_____ (Secretary)

_____ (Treasurer)

_____ (Member)

