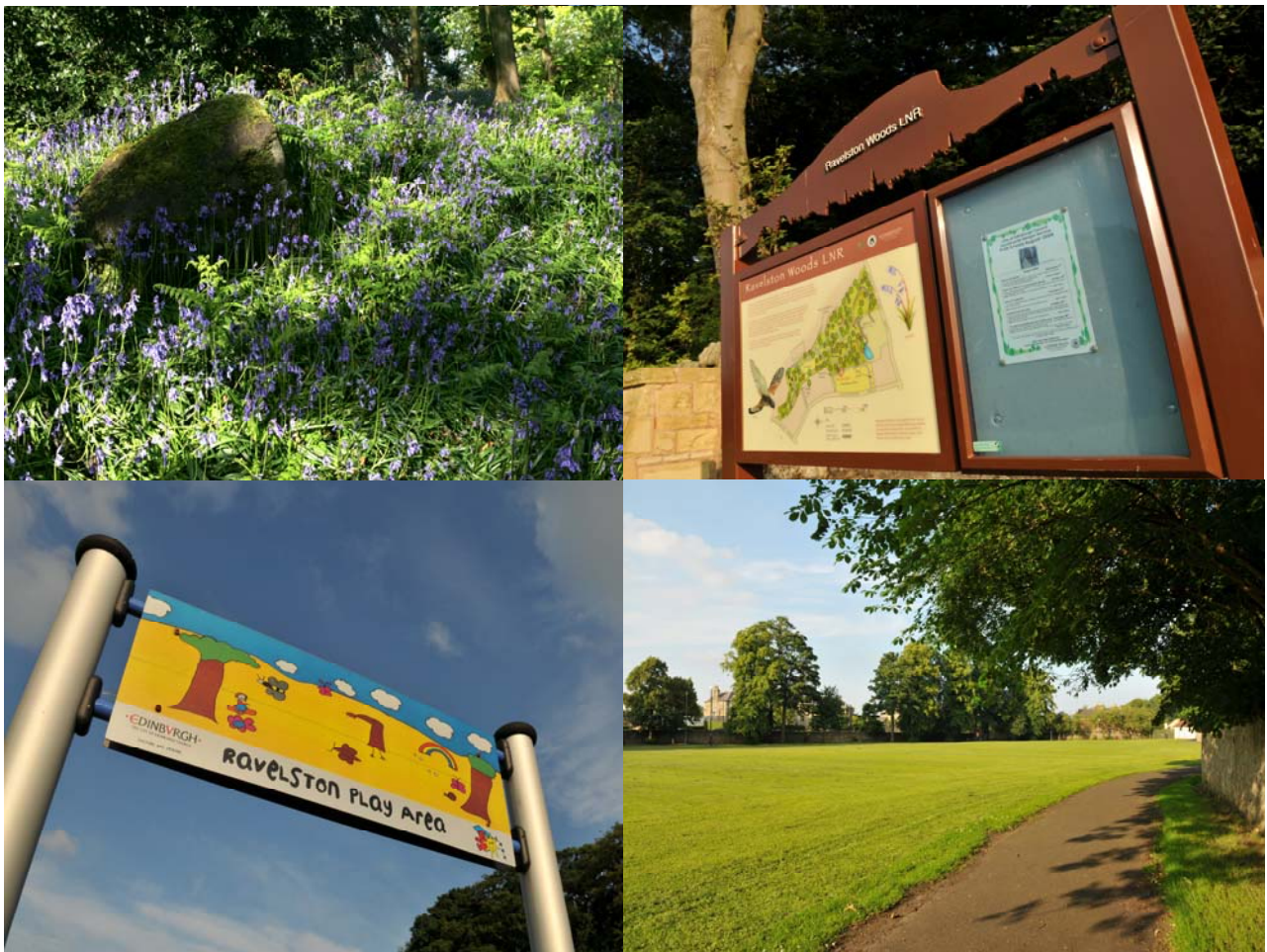


# Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve and Park Management Plan 2012 – 2022



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## **1. Vision**

*To ensure Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve and Ravelston Park continues to be a place for people to enjoy while preserving its natural and cultural heritage, sustaining it for the future*

## **2. Introduction**

Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve and Ravelston Park are locally important areas both for Edinburgh's wildlife and people. This Green Flag site contains a variety of natural habitats and this diverse flora and fauna, within a large urban area, requires the need for careful management; this is a fundamental element of this management plan. However, without careful consideration of the many and varied ways in which people have formerly shaped and currently use Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve and Ravelston Park the plan would be of limited value. It is therefore the intention of this management plan to provide guidance on the social, historical and ecological aspects relating to this important green space.

The purpose of the management plan is to provide a framework within which all future management is carried out. The plan enables an understanding on how and why decisions are taken, in relation to the reasoning behind the policies and proposals for action. The Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme/Woods In and Around Towns part funded the production of a previous woodland management plan which included operations such as removal of dangerous trees, path upgrading and litter clearing. Full details of previous works and objectives can be found in the Ravelston Woodland WIAT Management Plan, March 2005.

## **3. Park Description and Evaluation**

### **3.1. Scope of the Management Plan**

This management plan is intended to cover the period from April 2012 to March 2022. The management plan is a site specific document produced by the City of Edinburgh Council Countryside Ranger Service (CECCRS) and the North Parks Team. It is intended to offer guidance to all aspects of the management, maintenance and development of Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve (hereafter referred to as the LNR) and Ravelston Park (hereafter referred to as the Park). Where actions are specified, they will be prioritised to focus work programmes accordingly.

Despite the range and number of suggested actions that could be undertaken within the LNR and the Park, this plan is meant to be implemented under the reality of financial restrictions and limited staff availability, therefore the actions are focused and those included are specific, realistic and achievable.

A yearly report on the actions of the work plan should be undertaken and recorded to ensure knowledge of actions and objectives is kept up to date. The management plan should be reviewed after 5 years to take into account any major changes that may affect operations.

### 3.2. Site Details

The LNR and Park are located on the 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Map no. 66, centred on Grid Reference NT 21595 74373. Situated in the Blackhall District of Edinburgh, two miles west of the city centre, the LNR covers an area of 8.4 hectares and the Park covers 1.6 hectares. The LNR is a wooded hilltop with moderately steep slopes and crags and is particularly noted for its carpets of bluebells in the spring time. The Park is a small neighbourhood park that has served the community for over a century. It accommodates a variety of uses and activities including a sports pitch, ball court and play area. It is a popular place for walking, jogging, exercising dogs and relaxing. The LNR and the Park are freely accessible at all times.

### 3.3. Conservation Status

Ravelston Woods was awarded Local Nature Reserve Status in 2002, under the terms of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The LNR is designated as Ancient Woodland of both semi-natural and long established origin. However, the designation excludes the meadow area, which divides the designated area in to two. The LNR is classified as a Natural Heritage Park in the Parks and Greenspace Strategy and is also protected through the City of Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan because of its value to wildlife and to the local community as an educational resource. The Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015 is available at: <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/biodiversity>

Ravelston Park is classified within the Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy as a “Community Park”. Community Parks are defined as “parks serving chiefly the people of a defined local area. These are generally smaller in area and the facilities provided are likely to be relatively simple. Functions should be determined as far as possible by consultation with users and potential users. Access to these parks will be mainly on foot or by cycle.”

### 3.4. Ownership and Tenure

The LNR and Park are wholly within the ownership of the City of Edinburgh Council. The LNR is managed by the Countryside Ranger Service and the Park is managed by the North Neighbourhood Local Office.

### 3.5. Adjacent Landowners

Craigcrook Road runs along the northern edge of the park and properties on Keith Terrace share a boundary with the LNR. Blackhall Nursery is located in the south-east corner of the Park. The quarry site to the south-west of the Park is owned by Boland Scottish Properties. Access into this area is restricted under the Mines and Quarries Act (1954). The LNR is located to the south of the park, Mary Erskine School for Girls is located to the south of the LNR and Queensferry Road runs along the north-east edge of the LNR.

#### 4. Legislative Responsibilities

As land owner and manager of the LNR and Park the City of Edinburgh Council has many legal responsibilities. The relevant Act's are listed below; in addition to these the Countryside Ranger Service has a legal obligation to wholly maintain all the LNR boundaries under the schedule of feuing conditions.

##### Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

**Aim:** Part 1 of the Act establishes a right of access to most of Scotland's Countryside and Open Water, for recreational, educational and certain other purposes and a right to cross such land. These rights exist only if they are exercised responsibly. Some of the provisions for that purpose are also extended in relation to rights of way and other rights. Part 1 of the Act also imposes certain duties on local authorities in relation to access on and over land and, in particular, requires them to draw up and adopt core paths plan for their area.

**Relevance:** The LNR is countryside land available to all and is used for recreational and educational purposes and by those commuting to and from Mary Erskine School and Blackhall Primary. Those who use the area for any of these purposes must do so in a responsible manner.

##### Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004

**Aim:** The Act sets out a series of measures which are designed to conserve biodiversity and to protect and enhance the biological and geological natural heritage of Scotland.

**Relevance:** The LNR contains a good range of biodiversity and natural heritage, much of this area is an ancient Bluebell Wood and the designations on this area show its importance to wildlife.

##### Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended)

**Aim:** An Act to consolidate the Badgers Act 1973, the Badgers Act 1991 and the Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991. [16th July 1992]. Thus giving protection to Badgers and their setts.

**Relevance:** Badger setts are present within the LNR.

##### Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003

**Aim:** This Act has two principal aims. The first; to amend the offence of dog fouling so that the offence consists of failing to clear up after a dog rather than of allowing a dog to foul. The second; to establish new enforcement provisions in connection with the offence by enabling local authorities and police constables to issue fixed penalty notices to persons suspected of committing the offence.

**Relevance:** One of the many people groups who use this area does so for the purpose of walking their dog.

## The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995

**Aim:** The DDA aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people have faced in the past and in some cases still do. This Act has been significantly extended; this includes the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which gives disabled people rights in the areas of: employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services. The Act now requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

**Relevance:** The LNR and Park have a range of paths; the path around the Park is tarmac and there is a tarmac path which runs between the Queensferry Road entrance to the LNR to Mary Erskine School. These give easy access to people with mobility difficulties, wheelchairs or pushchairs. The rest of the formal paths within the LNR are type one with a whin dust surface however; there are also some less formal paths which have been used by people and developed over time. Some of these paths have gradients not suited to people with mobility difficulties; these restrictions are due to terrain that cannot be modified enough to make access open to all.

## Children's Play Area – The European Safety Standard

**Aim:** The Standard recognises the developmental importance of play and risk. It is felt that children need to experience risk and the Standard is designed to prevent injuries with a disabling or fatal result or where a child may receive an injury in the event of an incorrect judgement on their part. It cannot remove all possibility of injury. Parental or care giver supervision is seen as crucial in reducing injuries to very young children. Increased accessibility for children with disabilities has been borne in mind to provide a balance between safety and challenge.

The strategic vision for the Edinburgh Play Strategy is that:

*Edinburgh will be a child friendly city where all children and young people have access to play opportunities which offer variety, adventure and stimulus. They will be able to play freely and safely and make choices about where, how and when they play.*

**Relevance:** All City of Edinburgh Council Play Areas are designed in house to meet BS EN 1176 Parts 1 – 11. Prior to 1998 all play areas were designed to meet BS 5696. All play areas are held on a data base called Playsafe produced by Public Sector Software Ltd. This system holds information on all City of Edinburgh Council play areas, including; type of equipment, installation date, type of surface, fences and bins.

In addition to the legislation listed above, there is also established legislation which relates to Ravelston, which includes:

- Occupiers' Liability (Scotland) Act 1960 – The City of Edinburgh Council's liability to users of Parks owned by the Council derives from this Act. This act makes provision regarding any hazards or dangers on land. It requires the owner

*in respect of any dangers which are due to the state of the premises or to anything done...on them...[to take] such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that the person will not suffer injury or damage by reason of any such danger.*

Scottish law does not allow the transfer of liability where the landowner is negligent.

- The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) (Section 21) - Under the Act, Local Authorities have exclusive statutory powers to set up and manage Local Nature Reserves (LNR). A LNR is a place with special local natural interest, set up to protect nature, and for people to enjoy and appreciate.

## 5. Links with Local Strategies and Policy

There are many Council policies and plans which are relevant to the LNR and the Park, these include the following:

Capitalising on Access – An Access Strategy for the City of Edinburgh – The City of Edinburgh Council – September 2003

**Aim:** This strategy sets out a framework for developing inclusive access for everyone who lives in, works in, and visits Edinburgh.

**Relevance:** The priority action outlined by the Strategy relating to this area, which is relevant to the LNR is as follows:

*Linking of greenspace networks with residential areas is vital. Areas such as Holyrood Park and Braid Hills provide excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation close to where many people live. Information and signage can help raise awareness locally, so these areas realise their full potential.*

Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy – The City of Edinburgh Council, March 2006

**Aim:** The purpose of this strategy is that it sets realistic aspirations and shows the way forward to achieving them. The strategy is a means of matching the availability, function and role of parks and gardens with the changing requirements as identified by user surveys. The study has focused on parks and gardens within the urban area including the LNR and Park.

**Relevance:** Under the parks classification system, the LNR is classified as a Natural Heritage Park. Natural Heritage parks are described as follows:

*These are generally large areas, the functions of which are determined by topography and ecology. In the main, these parks will tend to be dominated by woodland but also include coastal areas with topographical features such as hills and river valleys. The semi-natural character of these parks means that management for biodiversity is of fundamental importance, many of which are designated or proposed Local Nature Reserves, Urban Wildlife Sites or Sites of interest for Nature Conservation as defined in the Edinburgh Urban Nature Conservation Strategy and Local Plans. Therefore these areas are well suited to informal environmental education. Access is likely to be via car hence they will generally include designated car parking areas within their boundaries.*



## The Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan 2010 – 2015 – The City of Edinburgh Council

**Aim:** The first Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan (ELBAP) was launched in March 2000 as an initiative to conserve and enhance Edinburgh's natural heritage. The current plan was launched in March 2011 and is the third ELBAP. It supersedes the previous ELBAPs and contains 12 species action plans and six habitat action plans.

**Relevance:** The LNR contains ancient bluebell woodland, as well as scrub habitat, some more open areas and rock faces. These habitats are important for a range of flora and fauna. Two of the species for which there are specific action plans are badgers and bats. Badgers are known to be present within the woodland and bat species are very likely to be present although surveys have never been undertaken.

### Edinburgh Core Path Plan 2008

**Aim:** Under part 1 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 every Scottish local authority has a duty to produce a Core Paths Plan. The Core Paths Plan is to identify a system of key routes for non-motorised access. In essence it supports sustainable transport objectives, contributes to better health, provides social benefits and contributes to tackling climate change.

**Relevance:** The Core Path Plan supports Edinburgh's Outdoor Access Strategy and Local Transport Strategy and will appear in future Local Plans and on Ordnance Survey Maps to underline the strategic importance of this network of routes. There are no core paths within the LNR or the Park however; the Core Path Plan identifies two local paths:

*This network of paths is based on the Scottish Paths Record and has been amended in response to the comments received during the Core Paths Consultation. This network of paths is provided as an indication of other non-Core Path local paths in the area and is not an exhaustive representation of all paths that exist on the ground.*

### Edinburgh City Local Plan

Edinburgh City Local Plan – This sets out the Council's policies to guide development in the city and its proposals for specific sites. The Plan covers the whole of the urban area, and part of its rural, Green Belt fringe. The Edinburgh City Local Plan is a replacement for five existing local plans, prepared at various times since 1992, covering different parts of the same area.

**Aim:** To provide a clear basis for determining planning applications. Allocate land to meet needs and targets set out in the Structure Plan. Provide a clear framework for regeneration strategies prepared by the Council, other public sector agencies and developers. Provide support for wider strategies of the Council, particularly the Local Transport Strategy, and help infrastructure providers to plan for the future.

**Relevance:** Ravelston Woods LNR is listed as a Local Biodiversity Site within the Edinburgh City Local Plan.

## 6. Public Safety and Security

All users of the Park and LNR are responsible for their own health and safety, however, regular safety checks of the Park and LNR are made. The CECCRS patrol the LNR regularly and carry out the following checks:

- Check the boundary fence between the LNR and the quarry to ensure there is no gaps or loose wire.
- Check the warning signs at the top of the quarry to ensure they are intact and have not been vandalised.

In addition to this, while on patrol the CECCRS also look for health and safety risks or defects to paths or infrastructure and repair or report them as appropriate. Outside office hours, the CECCRS has a telephone answering machine with the council switchboard number for the public to call for other assistance or alternatively they can leave a message.

With regard to security, there have been reports of members of the public who have been involved in incidents in the LNR. Where possible the CECCRS will either assist personally in such cases, or contact relevant agencies. The main tarmac path is well used by school children commuting to and from school, in the winter this can be during hours of darkness. There are clear sight lines that assist in lending a sense of safety through the LNR and Park. The Countryside Rangers, Community Parks Officer, Park Ranger, Environmental Wardens and Taskforce staff all regularly patrol the park and any issues are dealt with or reported immediately as appropriate.

### 6.1. Vehicles

Vehicular access to the Park and LNR is not permitted with the exception of authorised maintenance vehicles or where permission has been given to facilitate organised events. Vehicular movement is kept to a minimum at all times. There are no roads within the Park, however, access can be gained from one double gate off Craigcrook Road with Queensferry Road providing vehicle access to the LNR.

### 6.2. Lighting

Lighting exists throughout the Park and on the tarmac path in the LNR; this is maintained by the Street Lighting Section of Roads Services. Any lighting issues can be reported to Clarence on 0800 23 23 23.

### 6.3. Children's Play Area

The Health and Safety Executive have accepted that it is desirable to have some degree of 'acceptable' risk present within play area, more information is contained under 6.3 of the Play and Risk in the Play Area Action Plan. However, informal inspections are carried out by council employees who enter the play areas as part of their daily duties (Park Rangers, Playgrounds Maintenance Officer and Task Force staff). They report obvious hazards to the Council's workshop engineers. In-house ROSPA trained staff inspect the equipment on a monthly basis. Any defects identified are either repaired immediately or isolated and made safe, for repair at a later date. Written records of inspections and works undertaken are held with the Workshops at Inverleith Park. Annual inspections and risk assessments, conforming to the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII), are carried out on all the playgrounds by a qualified RPII Inspector and the inspection conforms with the requirements of BSEN 1176-11.

#### 6.4. Parks Management Rules

The Park and LNR are covered by the City of Edinburgh Council's Parks Management Rules. These rules are due to be updated during the period of implementation of this Management Plan. As current management rules will expire in 2013 a public consultation is currently underway. Both current and proposed management rules can be viewed at:

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/495/parks\\_gardens\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/1251/accessing\\_our\\_parks\\_and\\_green\\_spaces/2](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/495/parks_gardens_and_open_spaces/1251/accessing_our_parks_and_green_spaces/2)

#### 6.5. Tree safety

All trees in the Park are managed by the City of Edinburgh Council Forestry Service. Hazardous defects in trees are reported to the Forestry Department for inspection and action as required. Further information is available at:

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/a\\_to\\_z/service/940551/trees](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/a_to_z/service/940551/trees)

##### 6.5.1. Ezytreev

Ezytreev is a tree management package that enables the user to record and monitor data relevant to single and/or groups of trees. The basic type of data that can be captured could include, age, girth, height, condition, location and targets. The system can be used in many ways, from simply mapping trees to setting up timed management processes on a continual basis and creating works orders. Ezytreev is also reasonably customisable so the user can tailor it for specific needs. The City of Edinburgh Council purchased the system in 2006, and a large scale tree survey was commissioned to capture data relating to the trees in the streets, parks and woodlands that fall under the Parks and Greenspace remit; some 35,000 trees have been recorded to date. This system has been applied to trees within the LNR and the Park, the majority being within 20m of main paths, bounding properties, roads, pavements and other such infrastructure.

## 7. Natural Environment

### 7.1 Climate

The nearest weather station, at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, indicates that the climate is typical of eastern Scotland, with comparatively low rainfall, high sunshine, and modest temperature variations despite its northerly latitude. Winters are generally mild, temperatures rarely falling below freezing during the day. Whilst the summer months average 18°C – 19°C. Rainfall is relatively evenly distributed throughout the year.

Climate data for Edinburgh, Royal Botanic Gardens, 26m asl, 1971-2000, Extremes

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
<b>Record high</b>	15.0	15.2	20.0	22.8	29.0	27.8	28.3	30.0	26.7	24.4	17.3	15.4	30.0
°C (°F)	(59.0)	(59.4)	(68.0)	(73.0)	(84.2)	(82.0)	(82.9)	(86.0)	(80.1)	(75.9)	(63.1)	(59.7)	(86.0)
<b>Average high</b>	6.7	7.3	9.4	11.7	14.6	17.2	19.0	18.9	16.4	13.2	9.6	7.1	12.59
°C (°F)	(44.1)	(45.1)	(48.9)	(53.1)	(58.3)	(63.0)	(66.2)	(66.0)	(61.5)	(55.8)	(49.3)	(44.8)	(54.67)
<b>Average low</b>	1.2	1.4	2.7	4.3	6.7	9.6	11.4	11.3	9.5	6.7	3.6	1.5	5.83
°C (°F)	(34.2)	(34.5)	(36.9)	(39.7)	(44.1)	(49.3)	(52.5)	(52.3)	(49.1)	(44.1)	(38.5)	(34.7)	(42.49)
<b>Record low</b>	-15.5	-11.7	-11.1	-6.1	-2.4	1.1	4.4	2.2	-1.1	-3.7	-8.3	-11.5	-15.5
°C (°F)	(4.1)	(10.9)	(12.0)	(21.0)	(27.7)	(34.0)	(39.9)	(36.0)	(30.0)	(25.3)	(17.1)	(11.3)	(4.1)
<b>Precipitation</b>	66	49	53	40	49	39	62	62	63	79	64	63	709
mm (inches)	(2.6)	(1.93)	(2.09)	(1.57)	(1.93)	(2.32)	(2.44)	(2.44)	(2.48)	(3.11)	(2.52)	(2.48)	(27.91)
<b>Sunshine hours</b>	53	74	112	144	187	168	169	160	126	100	72	46	1,411

Figure 1: Source : Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh

### 7.2. Soils

In respect of soils, the site is considered quite fertile, with drifts of acidic and freely draining material. On the crag tops, the soils are likely to be quite shallow and prone to drying out in hot summer periods. The lower slopes have deeper soils, generally Brown Forest Earth.

No evidence of base-rich soils has been noted, and there are no known flushes or springs, as evidenced by the woodland ground flora.

### 7.3. Geology and Geomorphology

Most of the rock beneath Edinburgh and the surrounding Lothian region formed during the Carboniferous period, although we also see rocks from the earlier Devonian and Silurian and Ordovician periods (covering a total time span from over 400 million years ago to about 280 million years ago). The area has also been effected by Quaternary (2 million years to present) glacial activity. Information taken from The Edinburgh Geological Society, 2002

[www.edinburghgeolsoc.org](http://www.edinburghgeolsoc.org)

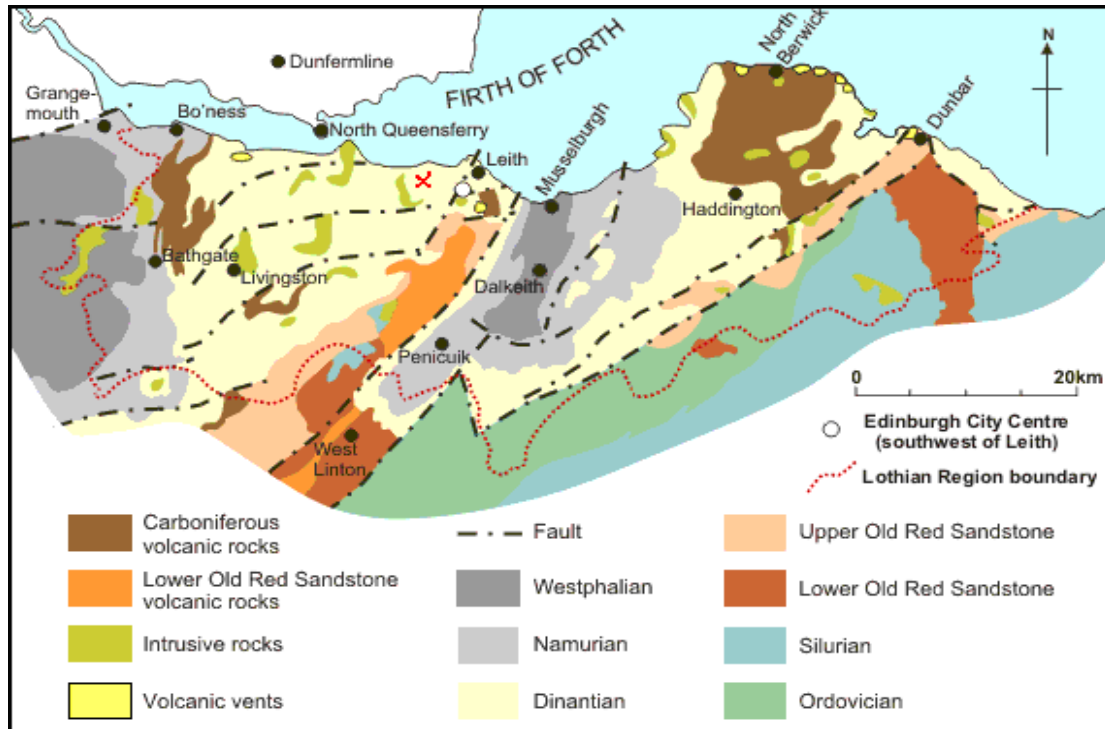


Figure 2: Source : The Edinburgh Geological Society, 2002

.....Hard beds of sandstone form minor hills like Ravelston Woods.

*These are entirely sedimentary in origin and are composed of hard sandstone dipping to the south, with a scarp facing northwards above Ravelston Park. This sandstone was laid down by rivers in the Carboniferous Period when the area was part of a large delta. Locally, environments changed through time from organic rich tree lined lagoons in which mud accumulated to sandy river banks and channels. The deposits of sand in the channels, on the banks and flood plains produced a considerable thickness of sandstone beds at Ravelston. These sandstones represent a small part of several thousand metres of sediment laid down in the Edinburgh area during the Carboniferous Period.*

Extract from Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve - Geological History and Information leaflet compiled by Cliff Porteous and Mike Brown, Lothian and Borders RIGS Group.

### Geology and Geomorphology: Evaluation

Ravelston Woods was designated a Local Geodiversity site in 2005, it is worth noting that although this is not a statutory designation it is currently used to designate the most important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land, the LNR is therefore recognised for its geological and geomorphologic importance.

### Geology and Geomorphology: Objectives

- To preserve the geological and geomorphologic landforms
- To enhance public understanding about geology and geomorphology

## 7.4. Habitats

There are six different habitat communities within the scope of this management plan. These are as follows:

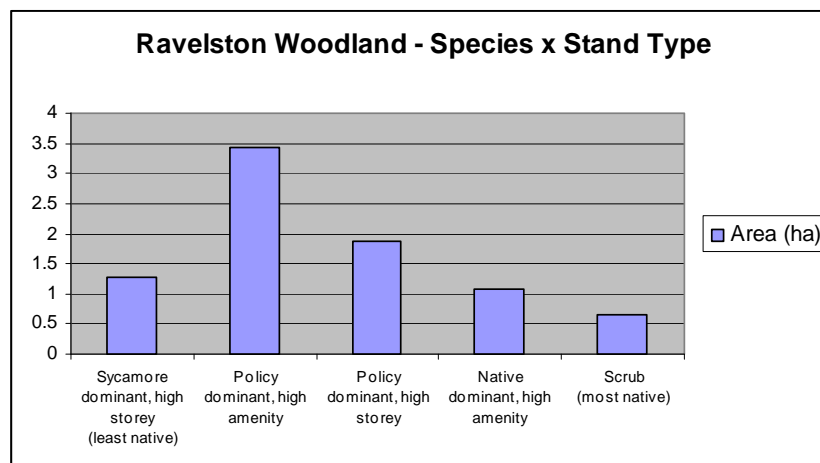
- Woodland
- Scrubland
- Non-native Invasive Species
- Meadow
- Rock Faces
- Amenity Grass

## 7.4.1. Woodland

### 7.4.1.1. General Description

Ravelston Woods is characteristic of similar sites within Edinburgh (e.g. Corstorphine Hill), it is a wooded hilltop with moderately steep slopes and crags, with high-storey, sycamore-dominated policy woodland. The woodland is thought to have been established after the Ravelston stone quarries closed in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, Ravelston House was constructed circa 1790 and the woodland established as part of Ravelston House policies. The woodland, however, is particularly noted for its carpets of bluebells.

The previous woodland management plan divided the LNR into eight separate management compartments, which together comprise five distinctive woodland types as shown below:



### 7.4.1.2. Woodland Classification

The LNR is listed as an ancient woodland, however, it is a mixed plantation with a 30m even-aged canopy dominated by sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* with occasional beech *Fagus sylvatica*, wych elm *Ulmus glabra*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*, sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*, larch *Larix decidua*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, Norway spruce *Picea abies* and lime *Tilia X europaea*. The woodland also contains a scattered shrub layer consisting of elderberry *Sambucus nigra*, rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and holly *Ilex aquifolium*. There is a varied ground layer with bare litter, grassy patches, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and ruderal patches.

### 7.4.1.3. Veteran Trees

Veteran trees are those which have a diameter of 90cm or more. Veteran trees are of particular interest as a microhabitat, having the potential to contain species of flora and fauna (e.g. lichens) that only grow on long established trees. Although no formal survey has taken place, veteran trees can be identified on the Ezytreev system. This system contains information on each tree which is surveyed. These are generally trees which are on or near paths, next to properties or roads. Information contained within this system includes the species, size and condition of the trees.

#### 7.4.1.4. Non-Native Trees

The LNR contains some species which are not native, for example those which were deliberately planted in the past as a landscape feature, and do not produce viable seed; these trees tend to be of limited wildlife value. One of the species identified is sycamore and in some areas these are self seeding. These trees should be removed and areas which contain higher numbers of non-native species should be thinned.

#### 7.4.1.5. Control of Disease

One of the species contained within the woodland is wych elms, *Ulmus glabra*. Dutch elm disease arrived in Edinburgh in the early 1970s, and many of the elms within the LNR have been affected. Trees are inspected annually, and are removed between September and March. To limit the spread of the disease, the stumps of affected trees are de-barked and all felled timber is burnt on site whenever possible.

No treatment occurs to any other tree species on site. Specimens affected by parasitic fungi are left to decay, as part of the natural process. The only time these trees would be removed is when they are close to a path, road or a building and therefore present a risk to people or property. Wood from trees which are felled, for health and safety reasons, is normally left on site to decay, thus providing good habitat for fungi and invertebrates.

#### 7.4.1.6. Deadwood Management

Deadwood is an important habitat in its own right and therefore any windblown trees which are safe and away from paths are left to break down naturally. Similarly, any stumps that remain upstanding after a tree has fallen over are also left in situ, whenever safe to do so. Tree works and selective thinning will generate timber of varying dimensions which can be utilised to create deadwood. Usually brushwood is crosscut and neatly stacked insitu to create habitat piles. Larger pieces can be dragged to a variety of positions to create a mosaic of open and shaded, moist and dry site conditions, ideally with a tractor mounted winch. Leaving timber insitu is usually only feasible where it avoids public open spaces and where it can be safely left without risk of rolling, vandalism or fire-setting.

#### 7.4.1.7. Current Management

The current woodland management focuses on health and safety; any trees which are identified as being dangerous or diseased are removed. Where appropriate the wood is left on site in the form of habitat piles, however, if this is not possible the wood is chipped on site. Trees identified with Dutch elm disease are taken down, stumps are de-barked and the timber is burned on site.



#### Woodland: Evaluation

The LNR is of very high local importance; it is an ancient woodland and contains a high variety of flora and fauna. This woodland should therefore continue to be managed for the biodiversity of the area to ensure the current habitats are maintained. However, it is also a well used woodland and must be managed for people which requires a careful balance.

#### Woodland: Objectives

- Manage the woodland in respect of health and safety and ensure healthy trees.
- Enhance the biodiversity of the woodland and tree line species and conserve the woods as a habitat for native flora and fauna.

### 7.4.2. Scrubland

The LNR contains some small areas of scrubland; species include elderberry *Sambucus nigra*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, raspberry *Rubus idaeus* and holly *Ilex aquifolium*. These areas provide good habitat and ground cover for many bird species and are therefore an integral part of maintaining the biodiversity of the LNR. This is a relatively uncommon habitat and therefore the current extent of scrubland within the site should be maintained however, care should be taken to keep these areas in proportion and they should not be allowed to encroach beyond their current boundaries.

#### 7.4.2.1 Current Management

Little management is currently undertaken within the scrubland areas of the LNR however, work is carried out to cut back anything which encroaches onto paths.

#### Scrubland: Evaluation

The scrub areas are maintained and monitored to ensure the continuation of scrubland habitats within the LNR but at the same time ensuring they do not substantially increase in size.

#### Scrubland: Objectives

- Continue to maintain a diverse scrub habitat
- Restrict the spread of rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

### 7.4.3. Non-native Invasive Species

The LNR contains one small area of Japanese knotweed, this is a non-native invasive species, and therefore management is required to control and contain it. If this area is not managed the Japanese knotweed could spread to other areas of the woodland, taking over and shading out native flora. The rest of the site does not contain much in the way of ruderal communities and there is no specific management for them except for cutting back vegetation to prevent it encroaching onto paths. Herbicides should not be used for controlling the non-native invasive species as this could damage surrounding vegetation including native wild flowers.

#### 7.4.3.1. Current Management

The Japanese knotweed is cut and the roots dug out of the ground annually, the debris from this work is burned on site to prevent any accidental spreading of the plant which may occur if it was moved from the area. Encroaching vegetation is cut back as and when required to ensure the paths are maintained to a satisfactory standard.

#### Non-native Invasive Species: Evaluation

The Japanese knotweed should continue to be controlled following the method of cutting, digging and burning on site.  
Encroaching vegetation should be controlled through cutting back during regular patrols and if necessary through a programme of works

#### Non-native Invasive Species: Objectives

- To continue in the control of Japanese knotweed with a view to eradicate it from the LNR
- Ensure any giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam which becomes present in the site is controlled

### 7.4.4. Meadow

The Ravelston Woodland Management Plan 2005 suggested that a small meadow area, 0.29ha, be maintained within compartment 2b. However the management required to achieve this was never carried out. It is therefore an aspiration of this management plan to develop a wildlife meadow within Ravelston Woods. The creation of a meadow area would increase biodiversity of the site. However, management would require a few small trees to be removed in the first instance. The current vegetation and grass would need to be cut and removed from site. Once the area was cleared it would be worth leaving it for a season to see what species are already present in the seed bank. The grass sward must be cut annually each summer after flowers have set their seed heads. The grass cuttings would need to be lifted and removed from site to prevent soil fertility building, as this tends to favour more common grassland species.

#### 7.4.4.1. Current Management

There is no current meadow management taking place within the LNR.

##### Meadow: Evaluation

A wildlife meadow would enhance the biodiversity of the area encouraging native wild flowers to grow which in turn leads to a higher abundance of insect species. Therefore, if resources allow a small wild flower meadow should be created within the LNR.

##### Meadow: Objectives

-Re-create meadow area within the LNR

#### 7.4.5. Rock Faces

The rock faces within the LNR are man made through the quarrying works which took place on the site previously. The quarry face is of recreational value and is used for informal rock climbing and abseiling.

#### 7.4.5.1. Current Management

The management of the rock faces is to ensure the safety of visitors, there is a high, steep drop at the top of the quarry and signs are in place to warn of this. These signs are checked by the CECCRS on a regular basis and any graffiti is removed, damaged signs are replaced as necessary. The top of the quarry attracts anti-social behaviour at times, particularly in the summer months; this leads to litter and fire sites which are cleared up by the CECCRS.

##### Rock Faces: Evaluation

The rock faces provide additional recreation facilities for those who enjoy rock climbing and abseiling, although there are no official fixed routes for climbing. Anti-social behaviour within the quarry areas should be discouraged and the warning signs should be maintained in good condition.

##### Rock Faces: Objectives

-Manage the rock faces in respect of health and safety

## 7.4.6. Amenity Grass

The only amenity grass is located within the Park area.

### 7.4.6.1. Current Management

The sports areas of the park are maintained by Specialist Grounds Maintenance and the playing field is on a scheduled route for tractor mowing. The grass schedule is to cut on a 10-14 day cycle by tractor mounted rotary mower, subject to weather. Smaller areas and horticultural elements are maintained by the local grounds maintenance team, complemented by work from volunteers.



#### Amenity Grass: Evaluation

The park, its assets and infrastructure are maintained and monitored to meet CEC (Landscape Quality Standards) LQS Standards and exacting health and safety standards.

#### Amenity Grass: Objectives

- Monitor grounds maintenance standards through LQS and PQA
- Continue staff training to meet grass cutting standards
- Consultation with local community for future park development

## 7.5. Flora

A full species list for flora of the LNR is not provided within this plan however, data can be obtained from The Wildlife Information Centre. Furthermore, a full NVC survey would be beneficial and has the potential to be undertaken as part of a student project. One species that has been deemed to be of high importance is the bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. The LNR is particularly noted for its carpets of bluebells.

Bluebells, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, has specific protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), having recently been added to Schedule 8, though under the same act it is an offence to pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant. Picking of flowers across the LNR remains an occasional issue.



### 7.5.1. Current Management

The CECCRS monitor and record flora during regular patrolling of the LNR.

#### Flora: Evaluation

A diverse amount of flora, some of a rare nature, is contained within the LNR. Future management should continue to conserve the ancient bluebell population and native flora should also be planted to enhance the Park for nature conservation.

#### Flora; Objectives

- To conserve and enhance the population levels of native flora present within the LNR
- Enhance the Park for nature conservation
- To enhance public understanding of the importance of native flora

### 7.6. Fauna

The table below indicates fauna observed within the LNR which receives special protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

#### Scheduled Fauna, Ravelston Woods Local Nature Reserve

Species	Scientific Name	Protection	Comments
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Schedule 1	Recorded once in June 1998
Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	Schedule 5	Sett recorded within LNR

In addition to this Badgers and their setts are also protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended). Also, approximately twenty-one bird species have been recorded within the LNR, some of which are Birds of Conservation Concern. In particular, it is worth noting that although Brambling is an important species, no specific management actions are required. Brambling are winter visitors to the British Isles and do not nest or breed within Ravelston Woods. However, the diversity of the LNR together with its location within the City of Edinburgh is important when it comes to understanding the importance of the area for wildlife.

### 7.6.1. Current Management

The CECCRS monitor and record fauna during regular patrolling of the LNR.

#### Fauna: Evaluation

The LNR holds a wide variety of fauna, reflecting its importance to wildlife. Future management should maintain the overall habitat distribution of the LNR, and maximise its value for wildlife. This may lead to conflicts of interest with many people using the site for recreational activities therefore; a careful balance needs to be achieved between the management of the LNR for biodiversity verses the management of the LNR for people.

#### Fauna; Objective

- To conserve and enhance the LNR for native fauna
- Enhance public understanding of the importance of the fauna present on site

## 8. The Historic Environment

### 8.1. History and Architectural Features

The earliest known record of the Ravelston Estate dates back to 1363. In 1620 the Estate was bought by George Foulis who built the first Ravelston House soon after purchasing the lands. Ravelston Estate remained in the ownership of the Foulis family until 1726 when it was sold to the Keith family. The first record of Ravelston Woods is on an estate map dated 1826, at this time the woods were known as 'Easter Plantation'. During the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Ravelston Quarry provided stone for the Parliament House. The original Ravelston House was destroyed by fire around 1835 and a new house was built in its place; this is now part of Mary Erskine's School. After the death of the last descendant of the Keith family in 1915, the Estate was bought by Mrs Stewart-Clark. In 1959 Ravelston House and 90 acres of land was bequeathed to the Church of Scotland and the Edinburgh Corporation for an eventide home and a public park respectively. However, death duties lead to the sale of the estate to T. Boland and Co. Thirty-five acres were subsequently sold to the Merchant Company for the Mary Erskine School for Girls which is still located on the same site today. Ownership of the now LNR and Park passed to the City of Edinburgh District Council in 1994; this became the City of Edinburgh Council in 1996.

Ravelston Park was also part of the Ravelston Estate, at this time it is thought to be nothing more than a field. However, it has been a traditional venue for the children's Blackhall sports day since around 1909. Over the years the Ravelston sports tradition has continued, handed down through the generations and nowadays it is a local gala run by the Blackhall Association.

## 8.2. Archaeological Sites and Monuments

An ice house still exists within the LNR; this is thought to have been built circa 18<sup>th</sup> Century and would have served Ravelston House. Today it is not accessible due to safety reasons and a padlocked gate prevents access. In addition, the 1853 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map indicates that the woods may contain remains of other significant landscape features of which very little is known. These include boundary walls, a possible pond feature and a site marked 'Temple'. Archaeological remains associated with occupation of the House from the medieval period onwards are also a distinct probability. The old quarry and the associated quarry roads are important archaeological features and should be preserved.

## 8.3. Current Management

The Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods produced a set of three interpretative leaflets, one of which entitled 'history and general information' gives details on the history of the area. These leaflets have since been re-printed and are available from the Countryside Ranger Service.

The ice house is examined during patrols to ensure it is kept secure and to record and report any defects.

### The Historic Environment: Evaluation

The historical records of the site are important in understanding the nature and current landscape of the area and therefore this information should continue to be available to the public and those interested in Ravelston.

The ice house is an important archaeological feature within the LNR, yet it is not well known or obvious to those visiting the site. The ice house should be preserved and included in interpretation material pertaining to the LNR.

### The Historic Environment: Objectives

- To preserve the historical and archaeological features of the site.
- To increase knowledge of the historical aspects of the site and about the archaeological remains within the LNR, potentially through a community project undertaken by CECAS/CECCRS and Local Community Groups.

## 9. Access

### 9.1 Access Points

There are several access points to the LNR and Park. These are located on Craigmock Road, Queensferry Road, and Ravelston Dykes via Mary Erskine's School which is a Right of Way.

## 9.2. Paths

The site is patrolled regularly by the CECCRS and all the main paths are monitored and maintenance is planned accordingly. The Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods have created a series of leaflets, one of which contains a map showing the main paths and facilities within the Park and LNR. The main path networks are illustrated on map one in appendix one.

Path improvement works within the LNR were undertaken during 2006 as part of a Woods in and Around Towns Forestry grant scheme funded project. The previous woodland management plan for the LNR details the work which was carried out. Continued maintenance of these paths is undertaken by the CECCRS, including scrapping the leaf litter and debris from the main tarmac path. The responsibility for mechanically sweeping all tarmac paths lies with Taskforce.

## 9.3. Disabled Groups

There are no paths specifically designed for disabled groups, however, access to the LNR is available via the Right of Way which runs from Queensferry Road along the main tarmac path to Ravelston Dykes Road. The topography of the LNR inhibits large-scale path creation for wheelchair users. Access into the Park is available via Craigcrook Road; however there are gates located at the two access points.

## 9.4. Boundaries

The LNR boundary is made up of a series of stone walls, post and wire fencing, PVC covered chain link fence and palisade fencing. These boundaries are to be maintained by CEC under the Schedule of Feuing Conditions. A copy of this schedule is held by the CECCRS at Hermitage House.

The boundary to the Park is made up of stone walls which the Council are wholly responsible for.

## 9.5. Signage

Orientation panels and display cases are located at the main access point between the Park and LNR (to the north of the play area) and at the Queensferry Road entrance. These orientation panels show a map of the site and give some information as to what can be found within the LNR. The display case situated beside the orientation panel is updated regularly; it gives seasonal wildlife information as well as promoting responsible access and giving information on local events and guided walks. In addition to this there is a threshold sign at the entrance from the park by the play area.

Within the LNR warning signs are located on the fence near the quarry pond stating no unauthorised access. These are regularly checked by the CECCRS and any defects reported to Boland Scottish Properties who installed the signage (with permission from CECCRS) to try and prevent unauthorised and dangerous access to their site. It is therefore, up to Boland Scottish Properties to maintain this signage. Warning signs are also located within the LNR, at the top of the quarry, these warn of a sudden drop over steep cliff and recommend children are supervised at all times, these signs are monitored and maintained by the CECCRS.



## 9.6 Path Management

Path surface and management differs between the Park and the LNR. As the park is managed as a more formal area the paths are all surfaced in tarmac and managed by the North Neighbourhood. However, the LNR is a more natural area and therefore most of the paths are constructed on type one and whin dust. The exception being the path between Queensferry Road and Mary Erskine's School which is a tarmac surface, this path is also lit making it safer for those commuting to the school.

Path improvement works were undertaken as part of the Forestry Commission's WIAAT grant scheme, these works were carried out in 2006. Since then many of the paths have been covered in leaves and debris which has built up over the years, this should be scrapped off after which the path surfaces can be surveyed to determine if any further works are required. The path between Queensferry Road and Mary Erskine's School is mechanically swept by the Council's Task Force, however, it also has vegetation encroaching from the sides, this requires to be cut back and the path edges scrapped on an annual basis.

All main paths are kept free of obstacles and encroaching vegetation. Staff clear nettles and vegetation from path edges and volunteers assist by cutting back overhanging branches with secateurs/loppers and with scrapping leaves/debris from the paths.

### Access: Evaluation

Path management of the site should ensure the paths are kept in keeping with their environment; the tarmac paths in the park should be maintained, some work is required to improve the condition of the paths throughout the LNR.

Current signage throughout the LNR and the Park should be co-ordinated in the same style which is used within other CECCRS managed parks. Signage should be monitored and maintained and the display cabinets should be updated regularly.

### Access: Objectives

- Manage and maintain the tarmac paths within the Park to provide continued access.
- Improve the path surface of the main type one and whin dust paths within the LNR
- Maintain the path edges and encroaching vegetation

## **10. Recreation and Facilities**

### **10.1. User Groups**

The large area of open grass provides a number of opportunities for active participation in sports such as football, rounders and cricket. Paths within the LNR and the Park are used by walkers, joggers, cyclists and dog walkers, whilst the benches offer a place for relaxation.

#### **10.1.1. Cycling**

Paths can be used by non-motorised vehicles i.e. cyclists, as long as they are acting in a responsible manner following the implementation of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code which promotes responsible use of accessible land.

#### **10.1.2. Dog Walking**

Ravelston Park is largely used by dog walkers as an access route to the woods. The Council's Environmental Wardens regularly monitor evidence of dog fouling and promote responsible dog ownership during patrols. If necessary the Environmental Wardens will enforce the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 and issue fines.

#### **10.1.3. Commuting**

Ravelston Park and LNR are used as a thoroughfare for several commuter groups. Pupils travelling to the Mary Erskine School may use a number of routes through the park, either from Queensferry Road or Craigcrook Road. Many members of the local community use the Park as a shortcut between Craigcrook Road and Queensferry Road.

### **10.2. Parks Asset Management**

A Microsoft Access database has been created that records all Park and LNR assets along with their location and a condition survey. Photos of all the assets are also included. A copy of the plan and a list of the assets is available on request from the North Neighbourhood Office.

### **10.3 Benches and Picnic/Game Tables**

Two styles of benches can be found in the park. Wooden benches with metal leg supports are located in the play area, while black metal benches can be found within the park.

Two game tables (snakes and ladders and chess) that double as picnic tables are new additions to the park.

Seating within the LNR has been discussed previously and was mentioned within the previous Woodland Management Plan. The decision was made that seating was not required within the woodland as it is a small woodland it was thought that seating would take away from the aesthetics of the area. Also, there are few locations where a seat could be installed due to the topography of the area; the few locations which were identified as possibilities looked directly over Mary Erskine's School and it was decided it would not be appropriate for any seating to be located in these positions.

#### 10.4 Litter Bins

Litter bins within the park have been replaced with a standard type, from the Broxap “Derby” range to create one uniform style. There are currently 6 bins located within Ravelston Park which are emptied by Taskforce.

#### 10.5. Play Area

A new play area was installed in Ravelston Park in 2004 and received a Nancy Ovens Trust Award for Best Community Award for Play. A community led project that started in 2007 to develop a disused and potholed tennis court was refurbished into a multi-use games court in 2009.

A Play Area Action Plan consultation is currently underway. The Plan aims to guide the improvement of existing play areas and to identify new opportunities for facilities across the city. A draft document has been prepared and is now available for public consultation until February 2012. Available to view at

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/495/parks\\_gardens\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/764/play\\_areas](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/495/parks_gardens_and_open_spaces/764/play_areas)



#### 10.6. Playing Field

This large open space is regularly used by the local community for sports and activities throughout the year. Also on the first Saturday in June the playing field is booked by the Blackhall Children’s Sports Committee for the Blackhall Children’s Sports Day and is marked accordingly.

## Recreation and Facilities: Evaluation

Cycling: Responsible cyclists are entitled to use the LNR and Park on a variety of paths

Dog Walking: The LNR and Park shall remain available to responsible dog walkers. All dog users have the duty to clean up after their dog, using the bins for disposal. The incidence of dog fouling, and its consequent health hazards, must be reduced across the entire site. Dog walkers and other members of the public, together with council staff, should all act to instill this message to those dog users who persist in allowing their dog to foul. This message can be reinforced by a combination of educational programmes, interpretative material, and enforcement by the Environmental Wardens.

Commuting: This takes place on a daily basis and should be encouraged.

Benches / Picnic Tables / Litter Bins: The benches and picnic/game tables are of a good standard which should be maintained

Play area: The play area is a well used and maintained facility

Playing Field: This is used for a variety of activities throughout the year.

## Recreation and Facilities: Objectives

- To encourage and facilitate sustainable recreation
- To encourage use of the area for communing
- Ensure benches and picnic/games tables are maintained in good condition
- Ensure bins are kept in good condition and emptied regularly
- Ensure health and safety standards are compliant with HSE guidelines and European Standards

## 11. Education & Interpretation

The LNR is used by many local groups for environmental education these include Blackhall Nursery and Blackhall Primary.

### 11.1. Environmental Education to Schools

The CECCRS encourages local educational groups to use the site and facilitate them. There is a booking system should the groups wish to request support from the CECCRS. In reality the groups who use the LNR are very familiar with the area and have people confident in delivering environmental education, thus reducing the need for the CECCRS to deliver environmental education on this site.

## 11.2. Earth Calling

Earth Calling is a leading provider of inspirational, hands-on environmental education who operates throughout the Lothian's, running wildlife experiences for young people. Some of Earth Calling's wildlife clubs are based at Blackhall Primary where they meet after school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during term time. Blackhall Primary have a wildlife area within the school grounds however, they also utilise Ravelston Woods for environmental activities.

## 11.3. Tertiary Environmental Studies

There are no records of any secondary schools utilising the LNR to assist in any of their studies. This is relatively common to all sites managed by the CECCRS; it is thought that the biggest hurdle for secondary school classes to carry out any work in the field is the restrictions imposed by timetables. For the most part universities and colleges do not engage with Ravelston Woods, however, Stevenson College carry out conservation work, on sites throughout Edinburgh, weekly which includes Ravelston Woods.

## 11.4. Special Needs Groups

Special needs groups are welcome to utilise Ravelston Woods, however, the topography of the area does not make this easy and there are no records of special needs groups visiting the Park or LNR. This may be due to other sites being more suitable. However, should a group wish to visit Ravelston Woods there is access from Queensferry Road, along the tarmac path, into the woodland.

## 11.5. Forest Schools

From July 2006 until July 2011 the CECCRS hosted Edinburgh's Forest School Partnership Project on behalf of other partner bodies FCS, SNH, the FEI Edinburgh & Lothians Cluster Group and <sup>1</sup>Careers Scotland. The project has

*..sought to actively increase the educational use of the city's woodlands" (Nicol, p.26;2010)*

by providing a supported package of accredited Forest School Leader training to those environmental and educational professionals interested in offering Forest School programmes to the clients they work with. This project has allowed the service to take a more strategic approach to positively engaging groups with the Natural Heritage parks under its management.

The Forest School ethos involves a group of children or adults visiting their local woodland area over a sustained period of time, whatever the weather (with exception of extreme weather posing an unacceptable health & safety risk). Programmes are delivered by an accredited Forest School practitioner and run for a minimum of six weeks (visiting the area at least once a week). However, some programmes take place all year round. Learning about the environment, self and each other is facilitated through a range of activities and experiences in the woodlands. This regular contact allows participants to explore nature, strengthen resilience, build confidence and take ownership of their own learning, all through a student centred approach. It is thought that Edinburgh now has at least 46 accredited teachers and group leaders throughout the city who are able to offer Forest School programmes.

<sup>1</sup>Careers Scotland were a partner body from 2006-2008 prior to changes in national funding through the Single Outcome Agreement.

## 11.6. Interpretation

Interpretation is important to any countryside area, however, Ravelston Woods is a relatively small woodland and as such it would be easy to clutter it with too much on site interpretation. Therefore, careful management is required to ensure there is enough interpretation on site for those using the area without spoiling the naturalness of the woodland. The main audience to the area is a mix of the people, who live in the local area and visit it regularly, plus visitors and tourists who only visit occasionally. This means the interpretation should include both the



basic 'what you can see' as well as an element of changeable or updateable information about what is currently happening in the area. There are two orientation panels located at the park and Queensferry Road entrances to the woods, each gives a map of the site and some information on the LNR, its geology and wildlife. To the side of the orientation panel is a display cabinet which is regularly updated with relevant information, including the advertising of the events programme.

In addition to the onsite interpretation a variety of other media is used, including guided walks (on request) for a variety of groups, (for example walking groups, 50+ groups, women's groups), as well as general guided walks and children's events which are open to the public. There is a set of leaflets, produced by the Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods Association, one of which covers the history of the LNR, another the geology and the third is a young person's wildlife guide. Information on the CECCRS and the parks they manage including the Ravelston Woods can also be explored on the internet; [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/countrysiderangers](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/countrysiderangers).

The CECCRS manages 12 Natural Heritage Parks throughout the city and therefore wishes to keep interpretation on these sites within recognisable style guidelines.

These are:

- The Interpretation should match the style and colouring of previous Interpretation produced on CECCRS managed sites
- Made from sustainable hard wearing material, vandal proof, can either be easily replaced or cleaned
- Must include CECCRS and CEC logo, and the logo of any grant providers
- Fonts must be easy to read and distinguish letters in good contrasting colours
- Must be physically accessible to all complying with government legislation

## 11.7 Current Management

The display cases onsite are updated regularly as is the website. Leaflets are available at the Hermitage of Braid Visitor Centre. All school groups, guided walk and event participants are issued with an evaluation form to assess the success of their day and the quality of the service provided.

### Education & Interpretation: Evaluation

The LNR is well used for environmental education although the groups are rarely led by the CECCRS, however, the groups using the site should be encouraged to contact the CECCRS to allow monitoring of the use of the site. Monitoring of the site is important to ensure particular areas are not overused. However, there is no desire to reduce the number of groups using the site at the present time.

A limited amount of interpretation is included on the orientation panels, adding to visitors experience of the LNR; interpretation panels are not situated within the LNR itself as it is thought this would detract from the area. In addition to what is located on site, the set of leaflets are in abundance and should last for a few years. Once stocks decline the leaflet should be reviewed and re-designed, if appropriate, prior to printing further leaflets.

Ensure the corporate look of interpretation throughout CECCRS managed sites. All interpretation materials should comply with design standards already in place.

### Education & Interpretation: Objectives

- Encourage groups to inform the CECCRS when they are using the LNR.
- Continue to provide up to date information in display cases
- Ensure continuity of any future interpretation with that produced for other similar CEC sites.

## 12. Marketing and Events

The CECCRS has a website [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/countrysiderangers](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/countrysiderangers) which informs the public about what parks the Council manages, how to get there, what activities or events are scheduled, and how to contact the service to report any issues.

The City of Edinburgh Council's Parks and Greenspace Service promotes the parks through the website, but also through a number of other ways, such as Park Surveys, which allow the Council to actively recruit the public's opinions about the parks they visit regularly. Other things such as a parks photo competition also increase the visibility and recognition of the City of Edinburgh Parks.

The Parks and Greenspace Survey was designed to capture people's views on a range of issues relating to parks in Edinburgh in general and the park they visit most frequently. The survey is available on-line at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/parksurvey](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/parksurvey). The survey data is collated and analysed annually in June. The results are distributed to staff and stakeholders, such as Friends of Park groups. They are also posted on the Council website and in parks' notice boards. The results are used to help prioritise work in parks. Where appropriate they are used to develop park improvement plans and feed into the creation of park management plans.

For important events, or to advertise information about local community group activities and projects, the CECCRS makes use of press releases, both in smaller local newspapers as well as the Edinburgh Evening News. These press releases are important to reach out to different groups and promote knowledge of the park and activities.

A Park and community notice board is currently being ordered and will be located within the Park.

All information about Edinburgh's events is contained within the Parks Manifesto. Available online at [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/4225/parks\\_event\\_manifesto\\_-\\_21k](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/4225/parks_event_manifesto_-_21k)

### Marketing and Events: Evaluation

The CECCRS should continue to develop a range of guided walks and events, including some at the LNR that showcase the benefits of Natural Heritage parks and the associated habitats and wildlife. Marketing should look at a variety of ways to get information to potential customers, and new ideas attempted to increase participation in events and provision of information about CECCRS.

### Marketing and Events: Objectives

- To continue to provide guided walks and events for a range of age groups
- To find new ways to increase participation and information about the CECCRS and LNR by members of the public



### 13. Partnership and Community

The increasing involvement of local community groups and individuals with an interest in the LNR and Park will be important in continuing the positive development of the site. Corporate and community volunteer groups, facilitated by the CECCRS, undertake conservation work within the LNR.

The LNR and Park is supported by the Blackhall Children's Sports Committee through the Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods Association; established in 2001 the group have been actively involved and consulted over past management.

#### Partnership and Community: Evaluation

A range of groups have been involved with conservation work in the LNR, this includes the CECCRS conservation volunteers, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and corporate groups. These groups are facilitated by the CECCRS, providing benefits to the site as well as to the individuals/groups involved. Positive outcomes include training and development, a boost to self esteem, and satisfaction from working in a natural environment and seeing the difference made.

The Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods Association have a keen interest in the area and report any issues or problems within the site to the CECCRS. However, the group have not held a meeting for some time now, therefore it would be worth organising a meeting to find out the groups situation and plans for the future.

#### Partnership and Community: Objectives

- To continue the involvement of volunteers, community groups and corporate groups within the LNR
- To establish the future plans of the Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods Association

## 14. Sustainability

The LNR is classified as a Natural Heritage Park under the Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006, therefore the emphasis is on natural areas of wildflowers and trees rather than formal flower beds being planted. Peat is not used within the LNR or the Park.

Within the LNR leaf litter, tree branches and fallen wood are left in situ if this is safe, or moved to areas away from paths if necessary, they are not taken away as waste. Any large items of rubbish removed from the site, particularly any fly-tipping, are taken to the local recycling centre where they are separated rather than deposited in landfill.

The majority of visitors to Ravelston Park and Woods are local residents who utilise it for taking children to school or for dog walking. Therefore the majority of users walk or cycle to the site.

A draft Pesticide Reduction Policy (2009) has been produced for the Parks and Greenspace unit within the City of Edinburgh Council. Herbicide application is only used when cultural practises will not provide adequate control. The Policy states;

*It is the City Of Edinburgh Councils policy, where appropriate, all non chemical alternative methods of weed control will be investigated and implemented depending on the requirements of the site, local environment and its users. This will also take into consideration, all available resources and any cost implications, which could impact on the local service delivery.*

*When non chemical alternatives are not suitable and chemical applications will be required, the Council will ensure;*

- *Chemical amounts are reduced by using alternative, low a.i. products.*
- *Application methods will be used to reduce the amount of chemicals applied.*
- *Application methods will be used to reduce chemical drift and any risk to the operator and the public.*
- *Chemical types and application methods will ensure that any risk to the environment is reduced or eliminated.*
- *Use well trained and certificated staff.*
- *Use well maintained and correctly calibrated application equipment.*
- *Continually monitor and review all chemical usage.*

Only affected areas are treated and only then using strategies that are sensitive to the needs of the public and the environment. At present herbicides are only used to aid in the control of Japanese knotweed, however if giant hogweed became present it would be sprayed.

### Sustainability: Evaluation

Unlike more formal parks, there is no use of peat and much lower use of any chemical herbicides or pesticides in the LNR. Efforts to reduce waste include leaving dead wood in situ wherever possible and taking waste that can be recycled to recycling centres rather than placing it in landfill waste collection.

### Sustainability: Objectives

- To continue to avoid the use of peat and reduce or adhere to strict rules regarding chemical use in the LNR
- Continue to reduce green waste by composting

## 15. Monitoring and Maintenance of Site

The LNR and Park are monitored and maintained by the CECCRS, Taskforce and North Neighbourhood Office. Work is identified and if it cannot be remedied immediately while on site it is then reported and prioritised. Where aspects within the LNR can be grouped together this will then form a 'Team Task' for the CECCRS. Alternatively, volunteers may be brought in to assist or a contractor depending on the requirements. Once the work is completed records in the Parks Asset Data Base are then brought up to date. CEC are in the process of adopting Landscape Quality Standards which are a means of defining levels of measurable quality

## 16. Operational Aims and Objectives

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Geology and Geomorphology													
To preserve the geological and geomorphologic landforms	Monitor site regularly through patrols; ensure no potential damaging operations are take place	CECCRS	All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To enhance public understanding about geology and geomorphology	Include geological and geomorphologic information when leading guided walks and on interpretive materials as appropriate	CECCRS	All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action										
Woodland														
Manage the woodland in respect of health and safety and ensure healthy trees	Regular patrols of the LNR, including monitoring of tree conditions, report any safety issues to the appropriate person	CECCRS	All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	Implement a programme to sever ivy from trees which are close to main paths or properties and along the Park Boundary	CECCRS	1, 2a, 3a, 3b, 4	1	2	3			6		8		10	
	Implement a programme to clear ivy from all boundary walls	CECCRS	1, 2a, 3a, 4	1	2			5				9		
	Thinning of holly along the edges of the main driveway	CECCRS	1	1	2		4		6		8		10	
	Survey trees in line with the Ezytreev system	Trees and Woodland Officers	All					5						10
	Lights to be kept clear of overhanging trees	Trees and Woodlands Officers	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Enhance the biodiversity of the woodland and tree line species and conserve the woods as a habitat for native flora and fauna	Thin out self seeded sycamore and ash trees	CECCRS	2a, 2b		2		4		6		8			
	Re-stock with native ground flora or trees if required	CECCRS	2a, 2b							7	8			
	Clear fallen branches away from paths and create habitat piles	CECCRS	3a, 3b	1										

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Scrubland													
Continue to maintain a diverse scrub habitat	Cut back scrub areas when they encroach onto paths or beyond their current boundaries	CECCRS	2a, 2b, 4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Monitor areas of scrub for non-native invasive species and remove if found	CECCRS	2a, 2b, 4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Restrict the spread of rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Cut down rhododendron and burn on site	CECCRS	3a, 5a		2		4		6		8		
Non-Native Invasive Species													
To continue in the control of Japanese Knotweed with a view to eradicate it from the LNR	Cut down Japanese knotweed and dig up the roots; burn on site	CECCRS	2b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Review control method for controlling Japanese knotweed	CECCRS	2b						6				
Ensure any giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam which becomes present in the site is controlled	Monitor the site for giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam and control if required	CECCRS	All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action										
Meadow														
Re-create meadow area within LNR	Removal of trees and ground vegetation. Note – A felling licence may be required and the Forestry Commission should be consulted prior to any felling works. Furthermore, all relevant legislation and good practice guidelines should be adhered to prior to and during the removal of the trees.	CECCRS and Trees and Woodlands Officers	2b		2									
	Re-seeding of wildflowers if required	CECCRS	2b				4		6		8			
Rock Faces														
Manage the rock faces in respect of health and safety	Monitor and maintain warning signs at the top of the quarry in good condition on weekly basis	CECCRS	5a, 5b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
<b>Park</b>													
Continue to proactively update asset database	Update Asset Database when new assets are installed in Park or the conditions of current assets alter	Local North Office (LNO)	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ensure health and safety standards are compliant with HSE guidelines and European Standards	Continue to carry out scheduled monitoring	LNO, Taskforce	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Consult with local community for future park development	Liaise with local community	LNO	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Amenity Grass</b>													
Monitor grounds maintenance standards through LQS and PQA	Cut grass every 10-14 days, weather permitting	CEC Specialist Services	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Continue staff training to meet grass cutting standards	As required	LNO, Taskforce, Specialist Services	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Consultation with local community for future park development	Liaise with local community groups	LNO	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Flora													
To conserve and enhance the population levels of native flora present within the LNR	Monitor bluebell population levels and reinforce the message of conservation if required	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Investigate the possibility of a full NVC survey being undertaken as part of a student project	CECCRS	ALL					5					
To enhance public understanding of the importance of native flora	Include information about the native flora and the importance of the Bluebell population on guided walks	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Enhance the Park for nature conservation	To plant a nectar border within the Park to enhance it for nature conservation.	LNO	Park			3							

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Fauna													
To conserve and enhance the LNR for native fauna	Monitor Badger Population	CECCRS, Lothians Badger Group	Compartments where badger setts are present	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Monitor badger setts for disturbance; report any disturbance to the setts to the Lothian and Borders Police	CECCRS, Lothians Badger Group	Compartments where badger setts are present	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Restrict public access to badger setts utilising natural barriers	CECCRS	Compartments where badger setts are present	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Enhance public understanding of the importance of the fauna present on site	Include information about the fauna, in particular the importance of badgers, on guided walks	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Historic Environment													
To preserve the historical and archaeological features of the site	Monitor and preserve the fabric of the ice house	CECCRS	5a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To increase knowledge of the historical aspects of the site and about the archaeological remains within the LNR, potentially through a community project undertaken by CECAS/CECCRS and Local Community Groups.	Include information on the history and archaeology of the site when leading guided walks and on interpretive materials as appropriate	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Investigate the potential to work jointly with a local community group to learn more of the history of the site and explore the archaeological remains within the LNR	CECCRS/CECAS	ALL					5					

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Access													
Manage and maintain the tarmac paths within the LNR and Park to provide continued access	Tarmac paths to be mechanically swept	Taskforce	1, 3a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Improve the path surfaces of the main type one and whin dust paths within the LNR	Remove leaf litter and debris from paths; top up depressed areas with type one as required	CECCRS	2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4	1		3		5		7		9	
	Re-surface paths with whin dust as required	CECCRS	2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4	1									
Maintain the path edges and encroaching vegetation	Strim path edges and cut back vegetation as required	CECCRS	1, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Recreation and Facilities													
To encourage and facilitate sustainable recreation	Monitor mountain bike use and promote responsible access	CECCRS, LNO	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Reduce incidence of dog fouling through education and interpretation	CECCRS, LNO and Environmental Wardens	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To encourage use of the area for commuting	Continue to promote access through Ravelston LNR and Park	CECCRS, LNO	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ensure benches and picnic/games tables are maintained in good condition.	Benches and picnic/game tables to be examined regularly and repaired/repainted as required, any that cannot be adequately repaired should be replaced or removed altogether	LNO, Taskforce	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ensure bins are kept in good condition and emptied regularly.	All litter bins to be checked during patrols	LNO, CEC Taskforce	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	All litter bins to be emptied within 4-day shift cycle	LNO, CEC Taskforce	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ensure health and safety standards are compliant with HSE guidelines and European Standards	Daily checks to be carried out on play equipment	LNO, Taskforce	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Monthly inspections to be carried out on play equipment by CEC ROSPA trained staff	ROSPA trained staff	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Education and Interpretation													
Encourage groups to inform the CECCRS when they are using the LNR	Liaise with groups who are known to use the park regularly	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Continue to provide up to date information in display cases	Update display cases regularly	CECCRS	2a, 4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ensure continuity of any future interpretation with that produced for other similar CEC sites	New interpretation produced should maintain the corporate look and follow the CEC design standards	CECCRS	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
<b>Marketing and Events</b>													
To continue to provide guided walks and events for a range of age groups	Deliver at least one guided walk or event within the LNR annually	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Continue to liaise with community groups who utilise the park for open days and events	LNO	Park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To find new ways to increase participation and information about the CECCRS and LNR by members of the public	Include Ravelston in any interpretation and media which is developed for all CEC sites	CECCRS, Communications	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Partnership and Community</b>													
To continue the involvement of volunteers, community groups and corporate groups within the LNR	Lead conservation volunteers groups	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Facilitate community and corporate groups	CECCRS	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To establish the future plans of the Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods Association	Liaise with the Friends of Ravelston Park and Woods Association; attend group meetings if appropriate	CECCRS, NLO	ALL	1									

Objective	Actions	Actioned By	Compartments	Year(s) for Action									
Sustainability													
To continue to avoid the use of peat and reduce or adhere to strict rules regarding chemical use in the LNR	Ensure peat is not used during any works within the site	CECCRS, LNO, Taskforce	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Minimise the use of chemicals within the site; only using them when required to control invasive species	CECCRS, LNO, Taskforce	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Continue to reduce green waste by composting	Allow dead wood to be left on site whenever possible.	CECCRS, LNO, Taskforce	ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Appendix One – Compartments and Path Networks within the LNR

