

Lauriston Castle Gardens



Management Plan 2018 – 2023

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1. Introduction

This Management Plan sets out the management, maintenance and improvement plan for Lauriston Castle Gardens. It provides a long-term vision for the gardens and details both developmental and operational actions required to achieve that vision.



With its calm, tranquil atmosphere, and stunning views across the Firth of Forth, Lauriston is the perfect place to escape from the bustle of the city centre.

Enjoy a woodland walk, a visit to our award-winning Japanese garden, or step back in time and experience what life was like in an Edinburgh middle-class home at the beginning of the 20th century.

The grounds of the 16th Century Lauriston Castle offer views across the Firth of Forth in a wood and parkland setting.



There are manicured lawns in contrast with woodland walks and a range of trees and plants in the elegant gardens including azaleas, rhododendrons, beeches, sycamores, sweet chestnut, conifers and monkey puzzle trees.

Also, the award winning Japanese Friendship garden, gifted by the prefecture of Kyoto, is a tranquil place to contemplate.

The management plan covers the period 2018- to 2023 and has a detailed plan of works for that period.

Like any management plan, its purpose is to provide a framework within which all future management is carried out. It will enable anyone involved with the garden to understand how the gardens is to be managed and improved to achieve the vision in line with our agreed policies.



This plan’s target audience is the local community, park stakeholders, elected members and council officers. Its style and content should ensure continuity of purpose and consistency in service delivery. It is intended to be a flexible, working document that will be reviewed and updated annually.

The plan is set out in four distinct sections:

- *“Where Are We Now”* – describes the current situation, which includes the policy and legal context within which it is managed and provides some basic information about the gardens.
- *“Where Do We Want to Be”* – develops the vision and provides an assessment and analysis at the time of writing and states the aims established for the gardens.
- *“How Will We Get There”* – describes the aims and objectives for the gardens.
- *“How Will We Know When We Get There”* – explains how the improvement, maintenance and management of the gardens will be monitored and reviewed.



1.1 Summary Information

Grid Reference	66NT 202761
Location	<p>2a Cramond Road South Davidson's Mains Edinburgh EH4 5QD</p> 
Size	13.131 ha
Boundary	

Opening Times	April to October 07:30am > 8:00pm November to March 07:30am > 5:00pm
Online Information	http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory_record/940758/lauriston_castle
Ownership	Lauriston Castle Trust (City of Edinburgh Council Perpetual Trustees)
Contact Details	Graeme Craig, Horticulture Manager, Parks Greenspace & Cemeteries, graeme.craig@edinburgh.gov.uk David Dorward, Botanical Team Leader, Parks Greenspace & Cemeteries, david.dorward@edinburgh.gov.uk
Area Designation	Category A listed buildings Outstanding inventory Gardens/Designed Landscapes Green Belt Wider Estate Landscape AGLV Wider Estate Landscape
Classification	Garden (Parks & Garden Strategy)
Park Staff	Botanical Team Leader, Supervisor Gardener & other gardeners. Other council staff with some remit also include Parks Rangers, Tree & Woodland Officers, Environmental Wardens and Waste Services.
Previous Plan	Lauriston Castle – Development Strategy and Management Plan 1999, Jura Consultants and Ironside Farrar
Stakeholders	City of Edinburgh Council – Parks Greenspace & Cemeteries Edinburgh Museums & Galleries Edinburgh Croquet Club Forest Kindergarten
Features	There is a varied range of features within the gardens; Lauriston Castle, Japanese garden, Italian garden, car parking, toilets, courtyard café, pond, croquet lawns, open grasslands, woodland walks and stunning views across Firth of Forth.
History	The designed landscape was laid out between 1823-55 with additions by later owners between 1871 and 1902. The architect for the 1820s castle extension to the castle was William Burn, with later alterations made for William Rutherford by



William Henry Playfair in the mid-19th century. The gardens were designed by William Henry Playfair and James MacNabb was also involved. This is detailed in the Playfair and Rutherford papers which are held in the National Archives and the National Library.

In the late 13th century, the farmlands of the estate were recorded as belonging to the Crown. Since 1290, the estate has known 32 different lairds. In the late 15th century the lands belonged to the family of Lawranstoun who took their name from the estate. In 1540, they sold to the Forresters of Corstorphine who, in 1590, sold to Sir Archibald Napier of Edinburgh, Stirlingshire & Merchiston, following his second marriage to Dame Elizabeth Moubray. Sir Archibald commissioned the Tower House, the core of the present Castle; his initials are carved on a pediment above the right-hand window and his wife's initials above the top left-hand window. His son by his first marriage was John Napier (1550-1617) who invented logarithms.



Sir Archibald was succeeded by his son by his second marriage, Sir Alexander, who became a Lord of Session and was titled Lord Lauriston after the sale of the estate in the early 1620s. He died in 1629 and three other families owned the estate between then and 1683 when it was bought by

William Law, an Edinburgh goldsmith and financier. In the same year, however, Law died. His son, John, inherited but neither he nor his successors lived there and there are no records of any tenancy during the next 140 years. John William Law sold the estate in 1823 to Thomas Allan, who commissioned William Burn to extend the Tower House to its present form. Allan died suddenly in 1833, without heirs.



Two years later, the estate was bought by William Ramsay, an MP who owned the neighboring estate of Barnton. He joined three Lauriston fields to the Barnton estate and then sold the Castle and remainder of the estate to Andrew, Lord Rutherford, (1791-1854) Solicitor General for Scotland and subsequently Lord Advocate in 1866. Between 1859-71, the residency period of Miss M.G. MacPherson Grant of Aberlour, the model dairy to the east of the house was built.

Thomas McKnight Crawford purchased Lauriston in 1871, and immediately commissioned alterations to the house, among these being the creation of a link between the coachman's quarters and the main house, thus making a side entrance. Many pieces of ornamentation were added to the house and gardens from his 17th century family home of Cartsburn.

In 1883 the OS Gazetteer described beautiful pleasure grounds around the house, although conflicting reports suggest that the house and grounds were neglected for a period before their sale to William Robert Reid in 1902. Reid was proprietor of Morison & Co, cabinet makers in Edinburgh, and it was he who 'modernised' the house and amassed the collection of Edwardian furniture which remains in the house today.

He gradually reduced the number of trees in front of the house and remodeled the pond, a former quarry, decreasing its depth to make it safe. He died in 1919 and, on the death of his wife several years' later, the house and grounds were gifted to the City of Edinburgh. During the World War II, the house was occupied by the Home Guard. Since then, it has been maintained as a museum and the grounds opened for public recreation.

The Japanese garden was built to celebrate the twinning of Edinburgh and the Japanese prefecture of Kyoto and was opened in August 2002.

2. Where are we now?

Lauriston Castle Gardens is managed by the City of Edinburgh Council's Botanical Services Team which is part of Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries. The service team also manages two other gardens (Princes Street Gardens & Saughton Park Walled Garden) and is committed to developing the quality of them all.



The management structure and current resource information can be found in appendix. Current resources have been reduced due to budget restrictions. There is currently one resident supervisor gardener based at Lauriston. Recent analysis has shown that three full time staff are required to keep the gardens at the level outlined in the council's landscape quality standards. Part of the proposed actions detailed within this management plan is to review the operational resource and identify how Lauriston Castle Gardens can be resourced moving forward while still achieving the Landscape Quality Standards.

The management of the castle itself comes under the remit of the council's Culture & Museum section.

Although managed by separate sections within the council there is a close working relationship between the two. There are monthly management meetings with all present to discuss any issues within the grounds and focus on developments moving forward.

2.1 Strategic Policy Framework

Programme for the Capital

The council's business plan sets out what we need to do as a Council over the next five years.

The Council needs a clear vision for the city we want Edinburgh to be and the type of organisation we need to be as a part of that vision. Most importantly we need to make sure that our

- strategies
- plans

- budget
- service plans

all combine to describe one direction of change, driven by the decisions made by elected members and our residents.

The Council business plan is built around **52 commitments** that the Council Administration has pledged to deliver over the next five years. The plan sets out what we aim to do and how we intend to do it. This plan will inform our decision making on how we use our resources. The principles and actions set out here will drive the way we reshape and redesign the way we deliver services and the way we work with communities and partners.

The Council's business plan can be seen at;

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20204/council_planning_framework/1255/council_business_plan_2016-20

Specifically, for Parks Greenspace and cemeteries the main commitment states “Continue to upgrade our existing parks and plant an additional 1,000 trees in communities. Protect major recreational areas such as the Meadows, Leith Links and Princes Street Gardens”

Additional policies and documentation specific for the management of parks and relevant to Lauriston Castle Gardens would be;

- Edinburgh Parks & Gardens Strategy
- Open Space Strategy 2021
- Locality Open Space Action Plan – North West
- Open Space Audit
- Sustainable Edinburgh 2020
- Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto 2014
- Edinburgh Parks Management Rules 2013

Access to these documents can be found at <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk>

2.2 A Welcoming Place

Lauriston Castle Gardens is a popular, well used location on the outskirts of the City in a very tranquil, scenic setting. The gardens are enclosed on all 4 sides by walls and woodlands and has fantastic views over the Firth of Forth and north to Fife.



The main entrance to the gardens is from Cramond Road South which also provides vehicle access to the main car parking area within the gardens. There is access to public transport on Cramond Road South with bus routes to central Edinburgh.

This then leads to the castle drive which provides good equal access for all into the central garden area and down to the castle itself. Most vehicle access is restricted to the main car park area; however, some service vehicles are permitted for deliveries and waste management.

The main driveway includes lighting and leads to the main garden toilet block with disabled facilities.

The garden is attractively laid out with a mix both formal and natural areas with a good mixture of trees and shrubs, lawns, grassland and woodland areas. Facilities include car parking, courtyard café, toilet block with disabled access.

2.3 Healthy, Safe & Secure

2.3.1 Safe equipment & facilities

Informal inspections of all assets are carried out by the resident gardener and any issues identified are reported immediately to either the Botanical Services Team Leader or the council's facility management team. The councils FM team have a 3hr timescale for any health & safety issues – any asset or area will be isolated until the necessary repairs are carried out.



All risk assessments and safe working practices for staff working within the gardens are held within the staff office area and managed by the resident supervisor gardener and botanical team leader. Risk assessments are formally reviewed on an annual basis but staff are asked to use these as a working document which should be used, checked and updated when and if required.

Staff also complete a “*Take 5*” Safety Form which allows them to assess the health and safety aspect of any work they do. – copy provided within appendix.

The Botanical Team Leader also carries out an annual depot health & safety check – copies are held with the Team Leader and returned and collated by the councils corporate health and safety team with any actions escalated to senior management.

2.3.2 Personal security

Updated management rules for public parks and greenspace were introduced in 2013 in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 112 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. These management rules cover general acts that are prohibited and what action can be taken. They also cover specific acts related to dogs, BBQ's, fire, camping, cycling, motor vehicles, events and other activities – copy provided in appendix.

All staff are tasked with reporting any potential problems and issues identified on site including any concerns and issues raised by the public.

2.3.3 Dog fouling

As outlined in the Parks Management Rules, dog fouling must be removed immediately by the person in charge (within the provisions of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003).

Also, introduced in 2013 was a voluntary registration scheme for commercial dog walkers using all public parks and greenspaces. Written permission is given to all who register and agree to follow a Code of Conduct. Those without permission can be asked to leave the gardens – a copy of the Code of Conduct is supplied in appendix.

2.3.4 Provision & quality of facilities

The castle gardens have a café situated in the courtyard of the castle and is operated on a concession agreement lease organised with CEC Museum & Galleries.

There is a separate toilet block situated within the gardens which provides good equal access. Most paths within the gardens are laid out in tarmac, cobbled or compacted stones. The woodland walk has a less formal path surface. There are also several presentation seats throughout the gardens.

The Japanese Garden includes “Tea Room” style shelters for the public to use.

2.4 Well Maintained & Clean

The Council's Botanical Services Team is responsible for the high standard of maintenance of all horticultural features within the Gardens.

The council's Landscape Quality Standards were developed during 2011-2012 and have been introduced across all PG & C locations. These standards focus on the result not the process (i.e. the length of the grass not the number of times the grass is cut), and provide a means of measuring the standard of maintenance in parks, gardens and greenspaces across the city.

For example, the croquet lawns / ornamental lawns, such as those in Lauriston Castle Gardens, will be expected to be maintained to an excellent standard exhibiting closely mown grass with little



or no weeds, have clippings removed after cutting, have defined edges and no litter (see Appendix for further details).

The maintenance standards are not formally monitored as part of an inspection regime.

However, the Botanical Team Leader &

Horticulture Manager will assess the standards during each visit and raise any issues with the supervisor gardener. This is completed on a weekly and monthly basis.

2.4.1 Main Features:

Front Paddock Areas

Two large open paddock areas sit at the front of the castle and either side of the main drive.



These areas are maintained as standard amenity grass.

Italianate Garden

A small Italian inspired garden is situated on the east side of the castle. Low hedging using *Buxus sempervirens* gives the balance and symmetry to the area and provides the structural framework for the various plantings used.

Woodland Walkway

An informal woodland walkway circles the complete boundary of the gardens providing tranquil walking space through a mature woodland setting.

The woodland and all trees are managed and maintained by the Parks, Greenspace & Cemetery forestry section. All trees have been surveyed and their species, age, size and condition are recorded on our "Ezytreeve" GIS-database.

All Elms are surveyed annually for signs of Dutch Elm disease and felled if appropriate.

The woodland and other areas of the garden are also used by the “Forest Kindergarten” – a Scottish Government trial. Forest Kindergarten models a Forest School approach for the Early Years, and is based around child-centred learning through play. Forest Kindergarten offers young children frequent, regular play opportunities outdoors in a natural setting, often woodland, in almost all weathers throughout the year.

Additional information relating to this project can be found at;

<http://www.owlscotland.org/local-options/forest-kindergarten>

Croquet Lawns

To the rear and north of the castle are two croquet lawns maintained by our staff and used by the Edinburgh Croquet Club (<http://www.edinburghcroquetclub.com/>). The club run events from the beginning of April through to the end of October. One lawn was laid out in 1950 with a second added in 1953. Drainage and levelling work was started by the Edinburgh Corporation in 1955 and the area rearranged to provide one full-size and two slightly smaller courts.

Japanese Garden

The Japanese garden was built to celebrate the twinning of Edinburgh and the Japanese prefecture of Kyoto and was opened in August 2002.

The garden's official name is 'Castle Garden to Water and Beyond'.

This 1-hectare stroll garden was built by Takashi Sawano and is recognised as one of the top examples of its kind in the UK by the Japanese Garden Journal.

There is strong links with the Japanese Consulate who regularly use the gardens to host events and tea ceremonies.



2.4.2 Litter Management

Litter bins are distributed throughout the park and are serviced daily by Parks Greenspace & Cemetery staff. This waste is then transferred to larger bins for Waste Services to uplift.

Currently, this is a very adhoc arrangement and with the addition of the café to the grounds, litter waste has become an issue.

A regular and more efficient way of dealing with waste including potential for recycling will need to be investigated during the initial period of this management plan. This will also include a review of the type of litter bins and placement within the gardens. This review will be outlined in the action plan detailed in this plan.

2.4.3 Arboriculture & Woodland Management

All the trees in the gardens have been surveyed by PG&C Forestry team. A total of 889 trees were recorded and their species, age, size and condition are now listed on the PG&C "Ezytreeve" GIS database. This enables a proactive approach to manage the trees and prioritising any required works on defective specimens

All Elms are surveyed annually for signs of Dutch Elm disease and felled if appropriate.

A new tree nursery area has been created at the Council's Inch Nursery with the intention to provide replacement tree stock in future years.

All green waste is recycled. Limbs and wood from any felled trees are chipped and used as mulch and larger trunks are stored at Corstorphine Hill for later sale. All sales generate additional income for the internal forestry team budgets.

2.4.4. Buildings and Fabric Maintenance

There are a range of buildings all with different uses in Lauriston Castle Gardens. These are listed below.

Name of building/structure	Use	Listing	Management
Lauriston Castle	Museum & Events	Listed Building Cat A	Museums & Galleries
Victorian Glasshouse	closed		Museums & Galleries
Victorian Gatehouse	closed	Listed Building Cat A	Museums & Galleries
Toilet Block	Toilet facility	None	Facilities Management
Maintenance Yard	Botanical Services staff bothy	None	Parks, Greenspace & Cemeteries
Japanese Tea structures	Seating	None	Parks, Greenspace & Cemeteries

The maintenance of buildings and other fabric assets requires further investigation. Although managed by Council service areas there is no clear budget for maintenance and clarification is required what is covered by the Councils Facility Management Service. This will be included in the management plans action list.

An audit of all facilities (e.g. signage, services) in Lauriston castle gardens was carried out in 2008 and this information is recorded on the Parks Greenspace & Cemeteries asset management database. This includes a range of information including ownership, management provision and contact details. A new audit of facilities will be included in the management plans action list.



2.5 Sustainability

2.5.1 Peat Use

The only use of peat by the Parks and Greenspace Service is in the production of bedding plants at the Council's Inch Nursery. Since 2004 the nursery has reduced its consumption of peat by 50% and aims to meet national targets of 90%. Many alternatives to peat have been incorporated into the growing mixes for plant production at the nursery, including; compost derived from the Council green waste collections, the nursery own compost, worm cast, fine bark, vermiculite and sand.

2.5.2 Pesticides

A pesticide policy has been produced by the City of Edinburgh Council. It states that, 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.
- All chemical used is recorded in operator log book.
- Use well maintained and correctly calibrated application equipment.
- Continually monitor and review all chemical usage.

At the Transport and Environment Committee in October 2017 a report was presented relating to an Integrated Weed Control Programme approach which will be used within Edinburgh.

The two main points were;

Adopt a policy that seeks to reduce the amount of glyphosate-based herbicide used by the authority to control weeds, limits the use of chemical herbicides only where there is no effective or reasonable alternative, uses the least harmful product and is applied in the safest way using the minimal amount of herbicide.

Note the intention to develop, implement and report back to the Transport and Environment Committee within twelve months an Integrated Weed Control Programme with achievable targets and objectives for the control of weeds along roadsides, pavements, other hard surfaces, and in parks and other green spaces. This programme to focus on the application of mulches and cultural maintenance, mechanised weed brushes, rippers and path edgers, and electricity, and to include a timetable for the phasing out of the use of glyphosate within the authority and to have alternatives in place.

A full copy of this report can be found at;

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4250/transport_and_environment_committee

2.5.3 Waste Minimisation

To reduce land filled waste, the City of Edinburgh Council is working to develop and extend initiatives to prevent, minimise, reuse and recycle not only the city's but also its own waste.

The Council is actively collaborating with other local councils in progressing the Lothian & Borders Area Waste Plan.

Tree limbs are chipped and used as mulch on site. Larger limbs and trunks are sold. Green waste and leaves are stored on site. Compost generated from household green waste collections is used by the Parks and Greenspace Service as a soil conditioner in seasonal bedding and a mulch on shrub beds.

Litter is disposed of appropriately to a licensed tip. A key aim of the waste management review (see Section 2.4.2) will be to investigate the introduction of recycling into the Gardens.

2.5.4 Environmental Sustainability

The Council has a duty to protect the environment wherever possible. The Council aims to improve its environmental performance (in purchasing) by encouraging manufacturers, suppliers and contractors through contracts and other means to improve or develop environmentally preferable goods and services at competitive prices.

2.6 Conservation & Heritage

2.6.1 Biodiversity

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 placed a duty upon all public bodies and office-holders to:

“further the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.”

Additionally, in complying with this duty a public body or office-holder must have regard to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

The main areas for biodiversity interest are as follows;

Woodland



The area has an impressive number of mature trees, both broadleaved and coniferous including the cherries and maples in the Kyoto Japanese Garden, lime avenue remnants, pines and commemorative horse chestnuts. There are numerous glades and pathways through the woodlands and this increases sunlight to the understorey.

Amenity Grassland

There are many large areas of managed amenity grassland. Using some of the edges as meadows that would not impact on the areas used for events and recreation could be undertaken on the larger grasslands. The croquet lawn and those near the Castle should be maintained for their amenity and landscape value.

Pond

The pond is overgrown with a lot of surplus vegetation and is shaded by tall trees. Hydrangea and Gunnera occupy large areas. There is substantial leaf build up and duckweed that increase nutrients, thus encouraging further vegetation growth and reducing oxygen availability. There are mallard and moorhen nesting on the pond.



Hedgerows, scrub and rough grassland

There are some excellent patches of bramble, ivy and rough grassland that, although look untidy, are excellent habitats for invertebrates and small mammals. Pollinators, including the honeybees, benefit from availability of nectar and pollen throughout the year.



Species noted: Blue tit, blackbird, robin, magpie, feral pigeon, jackdaw, carrion crow, fieldfare, black-headed gull, wood pigeon, wren, chaffinch, dunnock.

Future management & areas to consider in future planning (to be included within biodiversity action plan).

There are some areas of deadwood but there could be more left after woodland management, both standing and fallen deadwood are good for invertebrates and fungi.

Where appropriate, coppicing could be undertaken to extend the lifespan of trees and encourage wildflowers.

Nest boxes for birds could be put up, although as there are many mature trees, there are probably sufficient nest holes and sites already available. A survey of breeding birds undertaken in Spring would give a baseline of what species were present and what boxes would be of benefit.

A decision should be made as to whether the pond is to have a high nature conservation value or should be purely ornamental. If this is the case then are many sites that could be used to create another pond for wildlife.

Aim for some flowering plants in all months by use of bulbs such as snowdrops, crocus, winter aconite through to lesser celandine, snakehead fritillary, wild garlic, wild daffodil, English bluebell and wood anemone. Fruiting shrubs such as holly, crab apple and guelder rose can supplement bramble and ivy. Bee hotels could be installed on south-facing walls or structures. If there are areas of sandy, light soil then a bee bank could be constructed.

Notes from the latest detailed site inspection carried out by CEC Biodiversity Officer is included in the appendix and will be used to create various action points.

The CEC Biodiversity Officer has produced development guidance on managing parks and gardens for wildlife. The purpose of the guide is to help park managers pick out biodiversity options for their parks by giving them ‘pick lists’ for each feature in the park. These biodiversity options can easily be added to Management Plans and then carried out on the ground. A copy of the document ‘Biodiversity options for parks and greenspaces – a guide for park managers’, is available and a copy can be requested from the Horticulture Manager. This will be used as the basis for future management for wildlife in the gardens.

2.7 Community Involvement

Lauriston Castle Gardens fall within the City of Edinburgh’s North-West Locality area and sits within the local Barnton & Cramond Community Council area.

Although there is currently no Friends Group linked with Lauriston Castle Gardens at the time of writing this management plan the intention is to look at the possibility of developing one over the coming years.

As part of the community consultation (detailed later) members of the public have been asked if they would be interested in joining and/or being active in such a group. Interest has been shown in previous years however this has never been progressed or encouraged.

This management plan and the development list will include action on the creation of a Friends of Lauriston Gardens Group.

At present, there is many community groups specifically using the gardens. But there is also a close link with activities which take place within the castle itself. Many community workshops take place within the castle which also use the grounds.

As highlighted previously, the Edinburgh Croquet Club are based at Lauriston

With around 60 members, Edinburgh is one of the largest clubs in Scotland. Attendances on Saturday afternoons sometimes exceed 20, and smaller numbers play at other times during the week.



The annual coaching course for beginners

continues to be popular and to attract new players to the game. There has always been a good proportion of members who prefer not to be too competitive but who simply get a great deal of pleasure from playing their croquet in magnificent surroundings, with Lauriston Castle on one side and on the other an open vista to the Forth and Fife. But over the years the Club has also helped develop many fine players.

The croquet club operates from the beginning of April through to the end of October and is used most weekends for tournaments and competitions.

Full details regarding the croquet club can be found at <http://www.edinburghcroquetclub.com/>

A new initiative for 2017 at Lauriston is the introduction of a Forest Kindergarten group who use the grounds and woodland areas. This is part of a Scottish Government trial. Forest Kindergarten models a Forest School approach for the Early Years, and is based around child-centred learning through play. Forest Kindergarten offers young children frequent, regular play opportunities outdoors in a natural setting, often woodland, in almost all weathers throughout the year.



Children learn most effectively through play experiences. This is about creating interactions with people and the places where they play, learning to care for nature and the world in which we live. The concept of sustainability is best understood through experiential learning. Being outdoors in a natural setting enables children to develop a connection with the natural world that can lead to long-term environmental awareness, understanding and positive action.

This trial will continue at Lauriston over the coming years and with other sites throughout the city being added as it progresses. A number of community events are also held annually within the grounds of the gardens. This includes the Davidson Mains Gala which sees the culmination of the annual gala parade ending with a fete in the gardens.



Each year the Edinburgh Lord Provost holds a community garden party at Lauriston Castle Gardens which celebrates Edinburgh's communities, volunteers and charity workers.

Due to the links between Edinburgh and the Kyoto region the Japanese garden is often used by the Japanese Consulate for community events including tea ceremonies. It has also resulted in Edinburgh tea companies visiting the Kyoto Tea Festival in Japan.

A dementia friendly 'forget-me-not garden' is to be planted in the grounds of Lauriston Castle

At a meeting of the Council's Culture and Communities Committee today (Tuesday 30 January 2018), members agreed to the creation of a specially designed garden and to consider opening a drop-in centre for those with memory loss at the city's historic Lauriston Castle.

Through sensory planting and reminiscence features, it is hoped the area will provide support for the increasing number of people living with dementia in Edinburgh and raise awareness of the disease for which there is currently no cure.

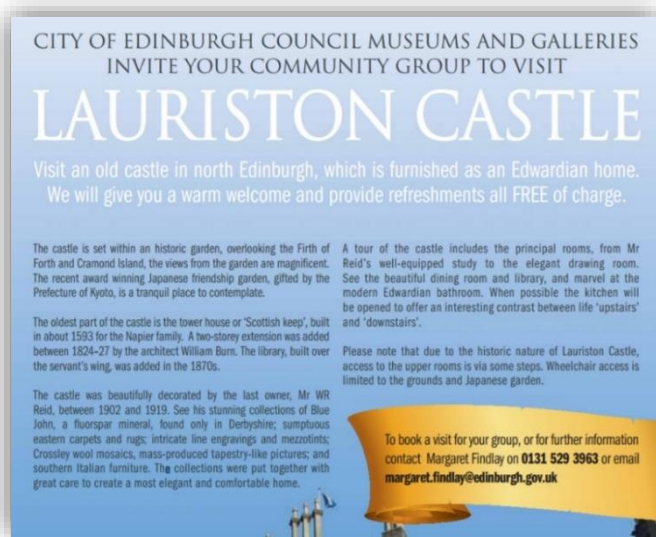
The area will be designed and managed by the Edinburgh Forget-Me-Not Garden Trust, which is seeking a 25-year-lease (subject to the agreement of the Council's Finance and Resources Committee) to establish a drop-in centre and support network for sufferers and their family, friends and carers.

Subject to approval, a 25-year-lease of Lauriston's Gate Lodge will allow the charity to apply to major external funding bodies for support.

2.8 Marketing

The main marketing for Lauriston Castle and the gardens is managed by Museums and Galleries; As well as featuring on the councils Edinburgh Park pages, Lauriston Castle & Gardens has it's own marketing page on the Edinburgh Museums & Galleries webpage;

<http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk/venues/lauriston-castle.aspx>



This gives detailed information about the site, visitor information, guided tours, events and what's available for schools and community groups.

Members of the public can sign up for email updates, find out information via social media links and leave comments via tripadvisor.

Lauriston Castle &

Gardens are also a 3 star visitor attraction as catagorised by the Scottish Tourist Board and is featured on their webpage.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/lauriston-castle-and-gardens-p245841>

YOUR COMMENTS

"Brilliant for a family day out. The grounds are fantastic, with a cracking view over the fields to Cramond island and the Forth, and great for picnics in Summer for the family. There's a Japanese garden with a wee stream running through it and carefully planned planting. There's a really relaxed feel about the whole place."
(Lauriston Castle)

Parmagiano, Edinburgh, via Trip Advisor



Edwardian home in tranquil free grounds cradling the sea near historic Cramond. Regular historical costumed performances. Year round programme of special events.

Lauriston Castle Tours and Special Events

Visit Lauriston Castle and see one of the most remarkable Edwardian interiors in Scotland.

Lauriston Castle is a hidden gem in Edinburgh with beautiful **free** grounds cradling the sea and with stunning views. Spend time relaxing in our calm and tranquil Japanese garden.

Visit the Castle and step back in time. If you manage to catch one of our special costumed performances, you will re-live a bygone era. Double up with a visit to historic Cramond and take a walk along the iconic promenade.

3. Where do we want to get to?

3.1 Vision Statement

The Council adopted its Edinburgh Parks and Gardens Strategy in March 2006. The strategy sets out a vision for its parks that states:

“A quality parks system worthy of international comparison; accessible, diverse and environmentally rich; which fulfils the cultural, social and recreational needs of the people”.



In developing this management plan for Lauriston Castle Gardens, its vision is:

“To maintain Lauriston Castle Gardens as a distinctive, attractive and well cared for place for the enjoyment of citizens and visitors alike”.

3.2 Assessment

The assessment and evaluation of Lauriston Castle Gardens is an on-going and continuous process. The basic evidence, which provides material for management discussion are described below;

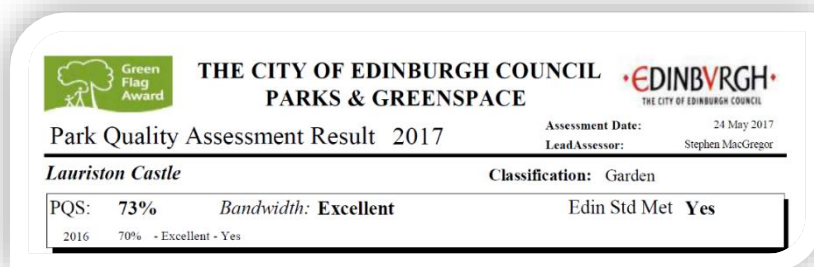
Park Quality Assessments

The quality of all parks and gardens in Edinburgh are assessed annually, using 26 of the 27 Green Flag Criteria. This is referred to as the Park Quality Assessment. Most of the criteria are assessed during site visits, whilst the remaining (e.g. community involvement) are self-assessed and scored by the site manager using guidance agreed by the Green Flag Forum (a group of officers who meet once a year to agree the strategy, methodology and scoring guidance for the next year).

Since 2008, over 140 people have taken part in the assessments including representatives from:

- Community group members,
- External partners i.e. Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust,
- Senior Council management
- Council staff indirectly linked to Parks and who have an interest
- Gardening staff

Each site is assessed using teams of assessors consisting of an experienced officer and a number of other assessors. Awareness of the Green Flag scheme and guidance on scoring criteria is provided for all new assessors.



Park Quality Scores (bandwidths) for Lauriston Castle Gardens

➤ 2016 – Score 70% Excellent

2017 – Score 73% Excellent

The summary of the Park Quality Assessment in 2017 highlighted;

Overall Comment: *“A interesting park to visit that has lots of interesting features around the site, slightly let down by maintenance issues at car park”*

A full copy of the assessment is included in appendix.

Tree survey

All the trees in the gardens, except those recently planted, have been surveyed and their species, age, size and condition are now recorded on the Councils “Ezytreeve” GIS-database. The last full survey was completed in 2008. The frequency of survey’s is dictated by staff resource, however, many trees have been re-surveyed at various times to present. Any trees that were considered dangerous have been removed.



A copy of the tree types and numbers are included in the appendix.

SWOT Analysis

During late 2017 a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was carried out with stakeholders (e.g. staff of the ground, back office staff, senior managers and external organisations) to gather their opinions on the Gardens as they are today and their views on how the Gardens should be taken forward. The SWOT analysis was for all the Green Flag criteria.

3.3 Aims of this Management Plan

The key aims identified are:

Aim 1 - A Welcoming Place – *to ensure Lauriston Castle Gardens is welcoming and accessible to all possible users*

Aim 2 - Healthy, Safe and Secure – *to ensure the safety of all staff and users of the gardens*

Aim 3 - Clean and Well Maintained – *to maintain the highest standards of horticulture, cleanliness, grounds and building maintenance*

Aim 4 – Sustainability – *To adopt environmental management principles and therefore reduce the impact of operations on the environment*

Aim 5 – Conservation and Heritage – *To maintain and promote the historic significance of the gardens and promote biodiversity through appropriate management*

Aim 6 – Community Involvement – *To encourage community involvement in the gardens*

Aim 7 – Marketing – *To actively promote the gardens to all potential users*

Aim 8 – Management – *To provide a responsive, flexible and high-quality management service*

4. HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

Lauriston Castle Gardens Action Plan

Jan 2018

Status key	
	Work has not started
	Work has not begun pending completion of earlier stage
	Work is progressing as expected
	Work is progressing with some issues/risks
	Work has stopped unexpectedly/failed
	Work has completed
Lead key	
GC	Graeme Craig, Horticulture Manager
DD	David Dorward, Botanical Service Team Leader
MAG	Museum & Galleries Team
EW	Environmental Wardens

P&G	Parks and Greenspace Team
SC	Street Cleansing Team
SF	Susan Falconer, Biodiversity Officer

The following action plan will be reviewed every three months by the gardens management group to monitor progress and update timescales. As this is a completely new management plan it is envisaged the following actions will develop into a more detailed plan as they progress. Current actions are high level with no costings or resources identified at this time.

Objectives	Action	Lead	Timetable	Status
1. to ensure Lauriston Castle Gardens is welcoming and accessible to all possible users	Review of vehicle movement and parking requirements. Ensure any proposals meet council's active travel and transport projects.	GC/DD/MAG	2018	
	Creation of formal parking layout	GC/DD/MAG	2018	
	Investigate introducing charging for parking	GC/DD/MAG	2018	
	Investigate road mirrors on main road for safe exit	GC/DD/MAG	2018	
	Review signage - information board requirements - more interpretation boards and positive message signage - including biodiversity and wildlife.	GC/DD/MAG	2018	

	part of formal parking layout - introduce disabled parking bays.	GC/DD/MAG	2018	
2. to ensure the safety of all staff and users of the gardens	Reintroduce picnic tables and review other seating	DD/PG	2018	
	Review access legislation for dog walkers - identify available options to ensure access for all	PG	2018	
	Review dog signage - education & enforcement	PG/EW	2018	
	Review all historical elements with view to repair	PG/MAG	2019	
	Investigate cost of restoring glasshouse - potential event space for community groups etc - income generation.	PG/MAG	2019	
	Introduce path restoration programme - use of bark mulch in woodland areas	DD	2019	
3. to maintain the highest standards of horticulture, cleanliness, grounds and building maintenance.	Investigate litter management options with CEC street cleansing - introduction of recycling facilities.	PG/SC	2018	
	Review maintenance of gardens - options to reflect available resource's	DD/GC	2018	
	Develop new planting/redevelopment plan	DD	2018	

	Investigate costs for pillar maintenance	MAG	2018	
	Carry out a full facilities audit	DD/MAG	2018	
4. to adopt environmental management principles and therefore reduce the impact of operations on the environment.	develop a site-specific biodiversity plan	SF/PG	2018	
5. to maintain and promote the historic significance of the gardens and promote biodiversity through appropriate management.	Introduce a pond maintenance programme and investigate culvert	SF/PG	2018	
6. To encourage community involvement in the gardens	Investigate interest in the creation of a Friends Group	PG/MAG	2018	
	Investigate community event days	PG/MAG	2018	
	Look at volunteer days - link with friends group involvement	PG/MAG	2018	
7. To encourage community involvement in the gardens	Develop and produce a marketing plan for the gardens and in conjunction with castle and museums and galleries.	PG/MAG	2019	
8 Ensure co-ordinated approach to management	Set up a management group to oversee the delivery of the management plan and other relevant business.	GC	2018	
	Hold management group meetings every 3 months	GC	On-going	

	Identify ways to increase income (sponsorship, events)	GC/MAG	On-going	
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5. HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN WE HAVE ARRIVED?

Management Plan

A Lauriston Castle Gardens Management Group will be established to ensure delivery of the action plan within this document. The Management Plan will be reviewed annually by the Working Group to ensure each element is progressing as per the timescales given. The planned actions will also be reviewed by the management group as highlighted previously on a 3 monthly basis.

After year 2 of this management plan a further SWAT analysis will be carried out with stakeholders, customers, visitors and staff using the same format and approach to the one carried out during early 2018. This will allow feedback to be assessed on the progress being made.

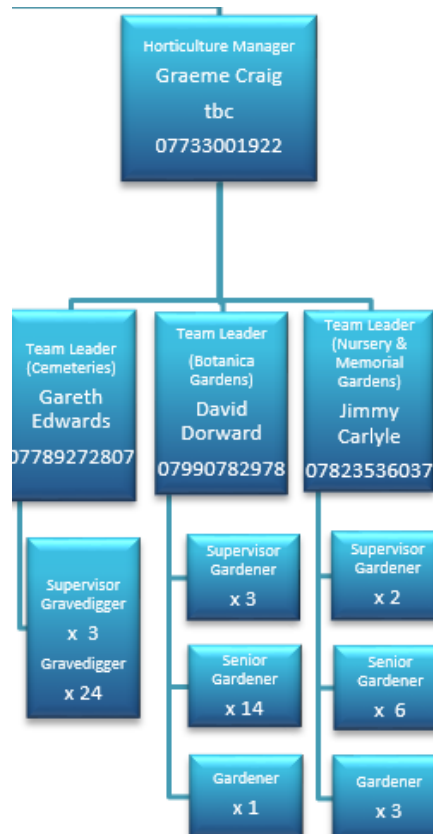
Performance Measures/Monitoring

The quality of Lauriston Castle Gardens is monitored annually via the Park Quality Assessments. These scores will be used to help assess the success of the management plan and help with the review of the action plan.

Each individual criteria used as part of the quality assessment and the comments given will be used to ensure the improvements identified are being achieved. Although Lauriston Castle Gardens has been assessed as an excellent location already it is hoped that individual criteria scores will rise and Lauriston Castle Gardens will become one of the top parks & gardens within Edinburgh.

6. Appendices

6.1 Management Structure - current



6.2 Staff Numbers & Costs (Annual costs for maintenance)

	£33.49	0	----- Vary SMV Rate/Hr				Avg hours	7.20		
STAFFING	3						% on SMV	80%		
feature_	feature_type_name	Qty	Unit	S SMV	S freq	W SMV	W freq	Total hrs	Staff Days	Cost
P000	PG Annual Bedding Area	302	M2	1.910	19	23.000	5	761	132	£25,493
P005	PG Established Woodland	18,878	M2	0.010	7	0.020	5	53	9	£1,791
P008	PG Hedges Formal	358	M2	1.400	2	1.400	1	25	4	£838
P013	PG Naturalised Bulbs in Grass	2,536	M2	0.017	8			6	1	£193
P022	PG Rose Bed	0	M2	0.920	19	4.750	5	0	0	£0
P025	PG Shrub Bed	1,071	M2	0.150	19	4.700	5	470	82	£15,749
P120	PG SAG - Fine Turf	47,980	M2	0.090	38			2,735	475	£91,589
TOTAL								4,051	703	£135,653

6.3 Health & Safety “Take 5” form



Take Five

Take five minutes to check and assess your site before beginning a job. Please complete the following table.

Location:		
Team members:	Name:	Date:
	Signature:	Time:
Take 5:	Yes/No N/A	Actions taken to minimise risk
1. List the hazards that could be present in this area. Consider task and site issues.		
2. Do I and all staff understand all relevant risk assessments relating to the task and site.		
3. Can other people's activities affect my own?		
4. Can my actions affect any one else?		
5. Does the weather affect my task?		
6. Am I complying with all the PPE required for the task and area?		
7. Am I using the correct tools and machinery for the task and area?		
8. Have the tools and machinery been checked?		

	<p>REPORTING OF NEAR MISS: Please provide details of any near misses - A Near Miss is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or damage – but had the potential to do so.</p>	<p>Details:</p>	

6.4 Management Rules for Public Parks and Greenspace (2013)

The City of Edinburgh Council in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 112 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 hereby make the following Management Rules for the Council's Parks, Gardens and open spaces:-

Interpretation

In these management Rules the following words have the meanings given to them:

“**Council**” means The City of Edinburgh Council;

“**Park**” means any land provided, owned, leased, occupied or managed by the Council within the City of Edinburgh and used as a recreation ground, public playground, public open space, public walk, walkway, woodland, ornamental or pleasure ground or gardens and all buildings and works connected therewith;

“**Council Official**” means an employee of the Council or of Edinburgh Leisure, or any person authorised by the Council to enforce these rules;

“**Code**” means the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, the guidance on the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

Summary

Any person, who appears to be breaking, has broken or is about to break any of the following rules may be asked by a Council Official to leave the Park. Any person refusing to leave will be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding level 1 on the standard scale.

Rules

1. **No person shall in any park wilfully obstruct, interrupt, verbally insult or annoy employees or agents of the Council in carrying out their duties.**
2. **Any written permission required by these rules must be shown on request to a Council Official.**
3. **The Council may decide to waive any particular Rule at any time.**

4. General ***The following acts are prohibited***

- 4.1 Behaviour which causes (or in the opinion of a Council Official is likely to cause) annoyance, offence, alarm or distress to any other park user.
- 4.2 Any wilful or careless act which damages or removes any plant, tree, shrub, building, structure, equipment, furniture or fitting.
- 4.3 Depositing litter except in litter bins provided for the purpose.
- 4.4 Pursuing any activity which endangers (or in the opinion of a Council Official is likely to endanger) any person or property.
- 4.5 Ball games in Princes Street Gardens, Lauriston Japanese and Italian Gardens, or Saughton Gardens.
- 4.6 Fishing in any water course without permit.
- 4.7 Depositing or leaving any substance or article which is likely (in the opinion of a Council Official) to cause injury or damage to any person or property.
- 4.8 Metal detecting in any park without the written permission of the Scottish Detector Club, subject to an agreement between the Council and the Scottish Detector Club being valid.

The following acts are prohibited unless the Council's written permission has been obtained first

- 4.9 Entering or wilfully remaining in a park when it is closed to the public.
- 4.10 Selling, hiring or offering for sale or hire any items or goods or services.
- 4.11 Displaying or handing out advertisements, conducting surveys or giving any displays or performances.
- 4.12 Begging or busking.
- 4.13 Engaging in any commercial activity whatsoever (including, without limitation, dog walking services, photography, filming and fitness training services).

5. Dogs and Horses

The following acts are prohibited

- 5.1 Allowing a dog to enter in or on a children's play area or area of the park that is designated as a 'dog free area.'
- 5.2 Allowing dogs to foul in a public park unless the person in charge of the dog immediately removes the fouling (within the provisions of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003).

- 5.3 Failing to keep a dog under close control in any park.
- 5.4 Failing to keep a dog under close control, at heel or on a short lead when near young farm animals and at nesting time (April – July) in woodlands, grasslands, moorland and at the seashore.
- 5.5 Allowing a dog to run onto sports pitches when these are in use.
- 5.6 Leading, riding, training or exercising a horse in a manner which falls short of the responsibilities in the Code

6. Barbecues,
Fire and
Camping

The following acts are prohibited

- 6.1 Lighting barbecues out with designated barbecue areas where these are provided, or in areas or in a manner likely to burn or scorch the ground or cause danger or nuisance to other park users or neighbouring residents.
- 6.2 Failing to remove litter associated with barbecues and picnics.

The following acts are prohibited unless the Council's written permission has been obtained first

- 6.3 Lighting an open fire in any park.
- 6.4 Camping within one mile of a public road.

7. Cycling

The following acts are prohibited

- 7.1 Cycling in a manner that falls short of the responsibilities in the Code.
- 7.2 Cycling off the paths in woodland and other areas sensitive to environmental damage.

8. Motor
Vehicles

The following acts are prohibited unless the Council's written permission has been obtained first

- 8.1 Driving or using or leaving any car, motorbike, quad bike, mini moto, or other motorised vehicle; or parking a caravan, except on roads and in car parks provided by the Council for cars and vehicles, unless the Council's permission has been obtained first. This rule does not apply to wheelchairs used for carrying children or people with a disability.

The following acts are prohibited

- 8.2 Operating any motorised or mechanically propelled toy or model vehicle, aircraft or boat, unless on a site designated for this purpose, to disturb wildlife,

endanger or give annoyance to other people or if asked by a Council Official not to do so.

9. Events and Other Activities

The following acts are prohibited unless the Council's written permission has been obtained first

- 9.1 Holding an event, performance, ceremony in any park, or a demonstration or public meeting in any park except East Meadows, Calton Hill or Leith Links.
- 9.2 Carrying, or discharging any firework or firearm.
- 9.3 Playing any organised game or sport on pitches provided by the Council.

10. Short Holes Golf Courses

The following acts are prohibited for those not engaged in the game of golf

- 10.1 Going onto playing surfaces when these are in use and onto greens at all times.

11. Expulsion and Exclusion from Parks

- 11.1 Where a Council Official has reasonable grounds for believing that a person has contravened, is contravening, or is about to contravene any of these Management Rules, they may expel that person from the Park.
- 11.2 Where a Council Official has reasonable grounds for believing that a person is about to contravene any of these Management Rules staff may exclude that person from the Park.
- 11.3 Where a person has persistently contravened or attempted to contravene these Management Rules and in the Council's opinion is likely to contravene them again, the Council may decide to make that person subject to an exclusion order for a specified period of up to one year.
- 11.4 An exclusion order made under Rule 11.3 shall take effect on such date as the Council may decide, being not less than 14 days after the decision to make that person subject to an exclusion order. A person who has been made subject to an exclusion order:
 - i) shall be entitled to written notice of the decision to make the exclusion order, containing a statement of the reasons for that decision; and
 - ii) shall be entitled to make written or oral representations to the Council at any time up to the

time that the order would have taken effect but for the representation being made.

6.5 Code of Conduct for Professional Dog Walkers

Parks and Greenspace are integral to our communities. They serve as a stage for our public lives, are settings where celebrations are held, where social exchanges take place, where friends mix, where cultures overlap, where nature thrives and where people revive themselves from the stresses of urban living.

Positive and respectful behaviour from all users is fundamental to the quality of our parks and greenspace.

The Council will therefore persuade people to act:

With consideration and respect for other park users.

- With a care for the environment.
- With responsibility for the safety of others and themselves.

With large numbers of dogs, professional walkers have the potential to cause a significant and negative impact on the park environment and the enjoyment and safety of other users.

By subscribing to the following code of conduct, professional walkers can minimise this impact, set a positive example to other dog walkers and deliver a safe and quality service for their clients.

Professional dog walkers using the City of Edinburgh Council's Public Parks and Greenspace agree to:

- Clean up after the dogs in their charge, in line with the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Keep dogs under proper control, in line with the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 and Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953.
- Minimise the impact that exercising multiple dogs could have on other park users. Quiet parks, or quiet areas within parks, should be used over busy parks and spaces near children's play areas. Parks with sensitive wildlife areas should be avoided.
- Take extra care when arriving and leaving parks and greenspace to minimise issues for other users. All dogs should be walked away from and returned to the vehicle on a lead.
- Provide public liability insurance cover for their service.
- Only exercise the number of dogs that are covered by their insurance policy, and exercise adequate control in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. The City of Edinburgh Council recommends a maximum of 6 – 8 dogs at any one time.
- Have a good knowledge of dog behaviour and reliable skills in training and handling dogs.
- Make themselves aware of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) and the City of Edinburgh Council's Park Management Rules (www.edinburgh.gov.uk/parkrules) relating to dogs.

6.6 LANDSCAPE QUALITY STANDARDS

Introduction

Landscape Quality Standards focus on the result not the process. They are a means of defining levels of measurable quality. It is not the purpose of the standards to indicate how a job or task should be performed.

The following tables provide a standard for specific landscape features within a park or greenspace. Each landscape feature is measured against the tolerance as indicated for specific characteristics (e.g. litter, grass length).

It is worthwhile clarifying what is meant by the characteristic 'Litter / Debris' as it applies to all features. Litter is anything small that is deposited and left that causes defacement in a public place. Debris is simply everything else that should not be present in the greenspace i.e. a pile of rubble etc. Habitat piles and dead wood deliberately left should not be considered as litter / debris.

Visual representations of the standards being met and not met have been included where available.

Standard Amenity Grass

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Grass Length	April – October > 25-60mm November – March > 25-80mm
Litter / Debris	No more than 2%
Grass arisings visible in clumps of 10cm or more	No more than 5%
Edges	Within 8cm of turf in clean and even manner
Acceptable vegetative cover	No less than 90%
Animal Fouling	No more than one instance
Overall Appearance	Most of the aspects of the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner

Low maintenance Grass

also including: Biodiversity / Meadow Grass & Naturalised Bulbs in Grass

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Litter / Debris	No more than 2%
Unwanted species found in area e.g. nettles, dock leaves	No more than 5%
Surrounding grass length	1.5m strip around low maintenance grass – maintained to adjacent standard
Vegetative ground cover	No less than 85%
Grass arisings visible in clumps of 10cm or more	No more than 5%
Animal fouling	No more than one instance

Overall appearance	the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner
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Plant Beds – including Shrub, Rose, Annual, Herbaceous & Mixed

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Weed Cover	Cover – no more than 5% Height – no more than 7.5cm
Litter / Debris	No more than 2%
Planting Density	As per recommended m2 planting density for species
Evidence of Pruning	Plant material shows evidence of required pruning for species
Mulch Depth & Distribution or Tilth Grade	Mulch – no less than 5cm in a clean & even distribution Tilth - Medium
Edges	As defined in the specification for adjacent grass
Overall appearance	Most of the aspects of the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner

Hedge Formal

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Encroachment	No more than 25cm
Foreign Growth	No more than 5%
Gaps	No more than 20cm
Litter / Debris	No more than 2% within base of hedge
Underlying Vegetation	No more than 5% within base of hedge
Evidence of Pruning	Plant material shows evidence of required pruning for species
Overall appearance	Most of the aspects of the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner

Hedge Informal

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Encroachment	No more than 40cm
Foreign Growth	No more than 10%
Gaps	No more than 40cm
Litter / Debris	No more than 2% within base of hedge
Underlying Vegetation	No more than 5% within base of hedge

Evidence of Pruning	Plant material shows evidence of required pruning for species
Overall appearance	Most of the aspects of the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner

Woodland & Copse Areas

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Litter / Debris	No more than 2%
Invasive Weeds	No untreated infestations
Tree Damage	No more than 1%
Encroachment	No more than 40cm
Margin Vegetation	Graduated cut to adjacent feature
Animal Fouling	No more than one instance
Overall appearance	Most of the aspects of the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner

Single Standard Tree

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Weeds	Weed free within 1m diameter of base
Mulch or Tilth	Sufficient depth and coverage or a medium tilth
Stake & Tie	Secure and causing no damage
Tree Guard	Slight movement and base gap
Damage	No recent damage
Litter / Debris	No more than 2%
Overall appearance	Most of the aspects of the feature being maintained in a coordinated & appropriate manner

6.7 Biodiversity Inspection

Lauriston Castle

Site visit 6 November 2017, 1300 to 1430

Weather – sunny spells, light north westerly breeze, 6°C

A walk around the former estate gardens and grounds to assess their nature conservation and biodiversity. The visit was severely constrained by the time of year and the lack of flowering vegetation.

Woodland

The area has an impressive number of mature trees, both broadleaved and coniferous including the cherries and maples in the Kyoto Japanese Garden, lime avenue remnants, pines and commemorative horse chestnuts. There were some areas of deadwood but there could be more left after woodland management, both standing and fallen deadwood are good for invertebrates and fungi. There are numerous glades and pathways through the woodlands and this increases sunlight to the understorey. Where appropriate, coppicing could be undertaken to extend the lifespan of trees and encourage wildflowers.

Nest boxes for birds could be put up, although as there are many mature trees, there are probably sufficient nest holes and sites already available. A survey of breeding birds undertaken in Spring would give a baseline of what species were present and what boxes would be of benefit.

Where trees are to be replaced, consider native species and those that are of benefit with berries and fruits such as rowan, blackthorn, hazel.

Amenity Grassland

There are a number of large areas of managed amenity grassland. Using some of the edges as meadows that would not impact on the areas used for events and recreation could be undertaken on the larger grasslands. The croquet lawn and those near the Castle should be maintained for their amenity and landscape value.

Pond

The pond is overgrown with a lot of surplus vegetation and is shaded by tall trees. Hydrangea and Gunnera occupy large areas. There is substantial leaf build up and duckweed that increase nutrients, thus encouraging further vegetation growth and reducing oxygen availability. There are apparently mallard and moorhen nesting on the pond, but no evidence of this was seen on the visit. (Image 2)

A decision should be made as to whether this pond is to have a high nature conservation value or should be purely ornamental. If this is the case then are a number of sites that could be used to create another pond for wildlife.

The pond



Hedgerows, scrub and rough grassland

There are some excellent patches of bramble, ivy and rough grassland that, although look untidy, are excellent habitats for invertebrates and small mammals. Pollinators, including the honeybees, benefit from availability of nectar and pollen throughout the year. Aim for some flowering plants in all months by use of bulbs such as snowdrops, crocus, winter aconite through to lesser celandine, snakeshead fritillary, wild garlic, wild daffodil, English bluebell and wood anemone. Fruiting shrubs such as holly, crab apple and guilder rose can supplement bramble and ivy. Bee hotels could be installed on south-facing walls or structures. If there are areas of sandy, light soil then a bee bank could be constructed.

Species noted

Blue tit, blackbird, robin, magpie, feral pigeon, jackdaw, carrion crow, fieldfare, black-headed gull, wood pigeon, wren, chaffinch, dunnock.

Further actions

Carry out a Phase 1 habitat survey, with additional appraisal – opportunities and constraints.

A breeding bird survey in April would determine the species present to enable an assessment of nest box requirements.

A survey of the butterflies and bees on site, using standard methodology.

Continue to note wildlife when on site and submit data to TWIC and iRecord.

Note and manage any invasive non-native species – none noted on site during visit.

Mature trees and rough grass at the edge of amenity grassland



6.8 Parks Quality Assessment 2017



THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL PARKS & GREENSPACE



Park Quality Assessment Result 2017

MacGregor24 May 2017

Assessment Date: Lead Assessor:

Stephen

Lauriston Castle

Classification: Garden

PQS: **73%** *Bandwidth: Excellent* Edin Std Met Yes
 2016 70% - Excellent - Yes

Criteria Score Key 0 = N/A; 1 = Very Poor; 2-4 = Poor; 5-6 = Fair; 7 = Good; 8 = Very Good; 9 = Excellent; 10 = Exceptional

A Welcoming Place	2016	2017	Strengths	Weaknesses / Recommendations
Welcoming	7	6	Good open views	Entrance car park area looks a little run down, squint exit sign, light damaged, bollard at car park damaged
Good Safe Access	8	8	Car parking and near bus route, good access around site	Car park was quite busy, would be full at weekends I would imagine
Signage	6	7	Threshold sign and signs around site	Damage to exit sign
Equal Access	7	6	Good seating around park	Disabled access to house would be difficult for wheelchair users. Picnic benches at entrance have been removed. Perhaps explore improved wheelchair access to Japanese and Italian gardens
Healthy, Safe & Secure				
Safe Equipment & Facilities	7	8	Good areas for kids for informal play, toilets good condition, paths/ seating fine	Some lights need attention
Personal Security in Park	8	8	Mostly open views, some lighting and CCTV	Some hidden areas in park
Dog Fouling	9	10	No evidence of dog fouling on site, park rules/dog walking	
Appropriate Provision of Facilities	8	8	Toilets good condition, informal play areas and paths fine, Japanese garden good	Picnic tables have been removed
Quality of Facilities	8	8	Quality generally very good	Some seats need attention
Clean & Well Maintained				
Litter & Waste Management	9	9	Bins serviced, overall the site is very clean	The odd instance of litter
Grounds Maintenance	8	8	Overall GM & Horti very good	GM at old picnic area not good
Building & Infrastructure Maint	7	7	Majority of buildings etc look well maintained	The glasshouse could do with some attention

Equipment Maintenance	7	7	Bins well maintained, the majority of seats fine	Some seats need attention, broken light
<u>Sustainability</u>				
Environmental Sustainability	6	6	All current council policies regarding environmental sustainability are being adhered to in the park	
Pesticide	7	7	Many of the shrub borders have been dressed with bark mulch o reduce herbicide use	
Peat Use	7	7	Peat use within the park continues to be monitored with the intention of reducing its use in new planting and seasonal bedding	
Waste Minimisation	7	7	No waste removed from site, leaves are composted and used in borders	
Woodland Management	8	8	Good range of trees that look well maintained	
<u>Conservation & Heritage</u>				
Conservation Fauna & Flora	8	8	Bee hives, various wildlife in the park	Did not see bird boxes or much info on wildlife
Conservation Landscape	7	7	Tree planting with estae trees, replacing some of the conifers that John Playfair had designed into the garden. Italian garden planted	
Conservation Buildings	6	7	Majority of buildings/structures fine	Glasshouse could do with some work
<u>Community Involvement</u>				
Community Involvement	4	4	There is periodic involvement in the Park	
Community Provision	6	6	The council provides support in the form of funding etc	
<u>Marketing & Promotion</u>				
Marketing & Promotion	8	8	Museums and parks web site	
Information Provision	4	7	Info re Japanese Garden, info re war memorial, good info at entrance with the plan of the park	
Educ & Interpretative Provision	5	7	Good info at points of interest	
<u>Management</u>				
Management Plan Implementation	0	0		
<u>Overall Comments</u>		A interesting park to visit that has lots of interesting features around the site, slightly let down by maintenance issues at car park.		
<u>Recommendations</u>		Consider reinstating picnic tables at car park area		
		Straighten exit sign at car park		
		Fix lights		

6.9 Tree Survey – types and numbers

Tree Count - by Common name

- Default analysis settings

Atlas Cedar	1 trees
Cedar of Lebanon	2 trees
Cherry spp	4 trees
Coast Redwood	1 trees
Common Ash	16 trees
Common Beech	25 trees
Common Holly	60 trees
Common Lime	193 trees
Common Yew	84 trees
Corsican Pine	10 trees
Deodar Cedar	2 trees
Downy Birch	1 trees
Elm spp	17 trees
Giant Redwood	2 trees
Hawthorn	7 trees
Holly spp	3 trees
Horse Chestnut	125 trees
Japanese Cedar	3 trees
Larch spp	8 trees
Lawson Cypress	2 trees
Lime spp	1 trees
Maidenhair Tree	1 trees
Monkey Puzzle	4 trees
Norway Maple	17 trees
Oak spp	22 trees
Purple Beech	5 trees
Rowan	1 trees
Scots Pine	5 trees
Silver Birch	5 trees
Sitka Spruce	2 trees
Sycamore	222 trees
Tulip tree	2 trees
Turkey Oak	1 trees
Unknown - Broadleaf	1 trees
Unknown - Conifer	2 trees
Western Hemlock	6 trees
Western Red Cedar	16 trees
Whitebeam	1 trees
Wild Cherry	4 trees
Willow species	1 trees
Wych Elm	2 trees
Yoshino Cherry	2 trees

Notes:-

Overall total: **889 trees**

