

Edinburgh Living Landscape

Programme Plan - Executive Summary



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Edinburgh Living Landscape

Executive Summary of the Programme Plan

1 Background

- 1.1 In 2006, the Scottish Wildlife Trust launched a long term vision for nature conservation in Scotland entitled 'Natural Connections'. Underpinned by the concept of the 'ecosystem approach', the vision was about scaling up Scotland's nature conservation efforts from species and sites focused activity, to an ecosystem scale (the three pillar approach). But it was also about taking nature conservation itself out of its silo, and making it a much stronger element of socio-economic decision making.
- 1.2 The Trust has been keen to demonstrate how the concept might work on the ground and to this end the Trust is already working in partnership on two long term Living Landscape initiatives: the Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape - a predominantly rural focused landscape initiative in the far north west and the Cumbernauld Living Landscape – an urban landscape initiative in the Central Belt.

2 Edinburgh Living Landscape

- 2.1 The Edinburgh Living Landscape (ELL) will demonstrate that investment in green (and blue) infrastructure, which increases biodiversity and creates healthier urban ecosystems, also makes economic sense. High quality, vibrant, nature-rich urban places that are safe and easy to move around will attract inward investment and talented people as well as providing benefits (ecosystem services) derived from the natural environment such as clean water, flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, safe, low-pollution active travel networks and green areas within the city for play, exploration and education for children - which helps improve the lives of city dwellers. (Appendix 1 shows extent of area included in Edinburgh Living Landscape – which aligns with City of Edinburgh Council's local authority boundary).
- 2.2 The Edinburgh Living Landscape programme plan was developed in 2013 - 2014 and brings together the views and aspirations of the project's formally signed up partners and the expertise of the Programme Plan Board. The programme plan has been designed to act as a strategic overview of the initiative but it will also act as a working document to which more detail will be added as the partnership matures and specific and/or new projects are developed.

3 Governance

The Partnership

- 3.1 In 2012, the Scottish Wildlife Trust and City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) formally agreed to collaborate on the development and implementation of a Living Landscape programme for Edinburgh. It was agreed that the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Head of Policy and Planning would be the programme director and that a programme board would advise on and oversee the development and implementation of the programme plan. Following on from this initial agreement, Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust (ELGT), GREENSURGE and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh have become partners.

The Programme Board

- 3.2 Membership of the board is by invitation of the ELL partnership. Board members have been selected to reflect the ambitions of the ELL partnership with the aim being to draw on their area of expertise/local knowledge to help guide and shape the programme plan.
- 3.3 The programme director and has been responsible for writing up the draft programme plan, with guidance from the partners and programme board. The programme board has been responsible for finalising and approving the programme plan. Post launch, the programme board will continue to meet to monitor the ongoing delivery of the programme.
- 3.4 The vision, the strategic objectives and underpinning values and list of projects and indicators to measure success have all been agreed by the ELL programme board.

4 Edinburgh Living Landscape vision

It is 2050, Edinburgh is widely regarded as one of the best cities to live in Europe. The city is an exemplar of sustainable living where both people and nature thrive. People are increasingly accessing their local neighbourhoods on foot and car use is continuing to decline year on year, helping make urban areas more culturally vibrant and more liveable. The high quality of both the built form and green and blue spaces of the city has significantly improved the health, well-being and happiness of all people living and working in Edinburgh and cut carbon emissions dramatically. This quality is attracting inward investment and talented people in increasing numbers. Local people have taken ownership of safeguarding the health of their urban ecosystem by becoming more actively involved in planning decisions and the day to day stewardship of greenspaces.

5 Edinburgh Living Landscape strategic objectives

- Ecosystem health of Edinburgh is improving year on year
- Improved ecosystem health in Edinburgh is having measurable socio-economic benefits for the city, particularly in areas of deprivation
- More people are engaged in caring for their local greenspaces
- More people are making use of Edinburgh's connected network of green and blue spaces to move around the city by walking and cycling
- New developments are planned and delivered in such a way as to create low carbon, walkable neighbourhoods, and workplaces containing high quality green infrastructure.

6 A climate change adapted city

- 6.1 In 2011, the Scottish Wildlife Trust produced Policy Futures 3: Climate Connections¹ which explained how the maintenance and restoration of ecosystem health plays a key role in helping balance Scotland's carbon budget and creating a low carbon, high biodiversity economy. Climate Connections recognised that most people in Scotland live in an urban setting and adapting the urban environment to the impacts of climate change to ensure towns and cities remain 'liveable' will be a key challenge in the coming decades.

¹ Scottish Wildlife Trust Policy Futures 3: Climate Connection: towards low carbon high biodiversity economies http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/docs/027__104__publications__Climate_Connections_final__low_res__1306398243.pdf

6.2 The Edinburgh Living Landscape has modified the characteristics of a climate change adapted city listed in Climate Connections to meet Edinburgh’s requirements and an outline of the characteristics of an ‘ideal future’ city of Edinburgh are summarised below.

6.3 Characteristics of an ‘ideal future’ city of Edinburgh:

- Compact
- Walkable
- Water smart
- Networked
- Liveable
- Providing multiple recreational opportunities
- Adding value to the economy
- Being partly self-sufficient
- Clean and healthy
- Biologically diverse
- Inclusive and democratic
- Providing educational opportunities

7 Edinburgh Living Landscape programme description

7.1 The proposed projects have been developed and were signed off by the programme board in January 2014. The projects and how they link to the ELL strategic objectives are listed in Table 1 below.

7.2 Once the programme is launched it is envisaged that more projects will emerge that will align with the ELL vision and help deliver the strategic objectives above.

Table 1: Projects for Edinburgh Living Landscape and their link to the ELL five strategic objectives

Project	Baseline data	Strategic objectives
1. Mapping broad and fine-scale greenspace/bluespace connectivity and greenspace typology (including ecosystem services)	CEC have already produced a report Mapping Edinburgh’s Natural Green Network- data inputted from: Open Space Audit; Natural heritage sites; woodland sites. Identified 15,288.1 hectares of natural green network, comprised of 488 patches; several categories which will need to be included to increase sensitivity range from school grounds to road verges. ELGT have carried out an integrated habitat network model for Edinburgh working at the broad scale.	1,4,5
2. Increase by c. 10 % area of wildflower meadows on council owned land	c. 138 ha, includes biodiversity/grass meadow and low maintenance grass); CEC have assessed that around 10% of CEC managed open space has the potential to be converted to wildflower meadows.	1,3,4
3. Increase no. of	17% of Edinburgh’s land area is covered by tree	1-5

Project	Baseline data	Strategic objectives
urban trees and urban woodland; selecting trees appropriate for the location (i.e. increase land coverage to 20% inclusive of increasing number of street trees by 1500 street trees. Both would take around a decade to achieve)	canopies and there are c. 638,000 trees in Edinburgh ² ; current population of street trees is 8,550; The area of native woodland in Edinburgh is 515 ha, which is 18.1% of the total woodland area, or 2.0% of the total land area of Edinburgh. ³ A woodland strategy for Edinburgh has been developed see: Edinburgh and Lothians Forestry & Woodland Strategy	
4. Increase the number of green exteriors of buildings (e.g. green roofs and walls) where such armature and building design would be appropriate for the location	No data	1, 2,5
5. 15% of city parks naturalised (excluding wildflower meadows)	There are 590 ha of public parks and gardens (Open Space Strategy 2010)	1,3,4
6. At least 10,000 people signed up to wildlife gardening pledge	No data; although CEC has advice about gardening for wildlife on their website.	1,2,3
7. Increase no. people growing their own food (or increase number of food growing areas)	The CEC manages 1233 allotment plots, spread over 21 sites across the city.	2,3
8. Work with planning department to produce a policy statement on the ecosystem approach and planning in Edinburgh	N/A	1,5
9. Work with volume house builder to showcase exemplar high quality and wildlife rich landscapes in new	N/A	3,5

² From CEC's Trees in the City Trees & Woodlands Action Plan

³ Forestry Commission's Native Woodland Survey of Scotland: City of Edinburgh Council

Project	Baseline data	Strategic objectives
development(s)		
10. Work with flood prevention team on nature based solutions to slow water movement	N/A	1,5
11. Provide accessible, multifunctional, high quality greenspace for all (i.e. within a 10 minute walk) to suit the biocultural needs of residents	Data is available on accessibility of different types of outdoor space in the Open Space Strategy: http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20178/park-management-and-rules/427/open-space-strategy	2,3,4,5
12. Increase areas of sealed soil 'depaved'	No data	1
13. Increase the number of local communities adopting local parks	There are 43 Friends Groups of parks out of a potential 142 parks	2,3,4
14. Increase and coordinate activity to remove invasive non-native species (INNS)	No data on total area covered by INNS; CEC has set up a team to tackle Himalayan balsam, giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed on Council owned land.	1
15. Bringing all Local Biodiversity Sites under active management	29 LBS	1,3
16. No. of schools having access to a high quality local greenspace for outdoor learning	No data	3
17. At least 10 'stalled sites' rejuvenated to deliver benefits for local people and wildlife	ELGT prepared a Vacant Land Feasibility Study in 2010 which identified 12 suitable sites	1, 3,4
18. Increase biodiversity value of active travel routes	No data	1-5
19. Increase the awareness of nature conservation value of Edinburgh's freshwater and coastal habitats	No data	1,2

8 Programme delivery

8.1 Following the launch, an essential part of the programme delivery and advocacy will be to coordinate action amongst stakeholders, partners, major external landowners, community groups etc. and identify and engage with potential funders to deliver the projects. Although securing external funding for some projects will be required, it is also envisaged that aligning CEC policies and actions with the objectives of the ELL will facilitate the delivery of the projects. The CEC Parks and Greenspace Department is already promoting ELL objectives and some of the projects will be delivered through this department's activities on CEC owned land. It will also be necessary to 'mainstream' the strategic objectives of ELL across other CEC departments. Some activities which will help deliver the projects are already underway therefore post launch, ELL is likely to deliver some 'quick wins'.

9 Measuring success

9.1 An essential part of the programme was to develop a set of indicators to measure successful outcomes of the ELL. Any indicator needs a starting point (baseline) which should change overtime in a positive manner as the numerous projects, which help deliver the ELL strategic objectives, start to take effect. Tables 2a and 2b show the indicators that have been chosen and signed off by the programme board.

Table 2a: Indicators to measure progress of the five strategic objectives

Strategic object	Indicator	Data Source	Monitor and report timescale
1. Ecosystem health of Edinburgh is improving year on year	1) habitat networks (indices of habitat connectivity) 2) % cover by trees/ Native Woodland Survey of Scotland 3) ecological status of water bodies 4) a species indicator (birds, bees)?	1) CEC (Mapping natural green network- update to include fine scale connectivity)/SNH 2) CEC/Forestry Commission Scotland 3) SEPA 4) CEC 118 Bird species RSPB garden bird survey? BTO/BBS University of Edinburgh - continue transects of urban pollinators initiative?	Every 5 years
2.Improved ecosystem health in Edinburgh is having measurable socio-economic benefits for the city, particularly in areas	1) GS initiative likely to develop indicator which could be used for ELL	GREENSURGE? Input question for CEC People's Survey? ⁴ Mental health indicator e.g. <i>Office for National Statistics - National Well-being;</i> Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics proxy: <i>Estimated</i>	Between 5 years 10 years

⁴ See: Edinburgh People's survey

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/9940/eps_2012_overall_report

of deprivation		<i>percentage of population prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression or psychosis</i>	
3. More people are engaged in caring for their local greenspace	1) % of people who are 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with their neighbourhood as a place to live. CEC People's Survey. 2) No. of park friends groups	1) CEC People's Survey (e.g. Q10) 2) presently 43/141 parks - CEC	3 years
4. More people are making use of Edinburgh's connected network of green and blue spaces to move around the city by walking and cycling	1) % people walking/cycling through park greenspace or woodland	1) CEC People's Survey (e.g. Q11)	5 years
5. New developments are planned and delivered in such a way as to create low carbon, walkable neighbourhoods, and workplaces containing high quality green infrastructure	1) CEC biodiversity award- or A and D design quality award? Natural Capital standard?	1) To develop?	Depends on development of award and take up by developers and CEC

Table 2b: Indicators to measure progress of the city outcomes

City outcomes	Indicator	Data source	Monitor and report timescale
Compact	1) Density measure e.g. no. of new houses per km ² or density of people 2) Public accessible greenspace as total of area	1) GIS? 2) Greenspace Scotland / CEC Open Space audit	5-10 years depending on new build
Walkable	1) % people walking through park greenspace or woodland	1) CEC People's Survey (Q11)	At least 5 years
Water smart	1) Incidence of flash flooding 2) SEPA's flood risk management maps? 3) Could include increased number of SUDs/rain gardens	1) CEC- flood prevention team 2) SEPA – flood risk management maps 3) CEC records?	At least 5 years

Networked	1) % using public or sustainable transport methods most often in last 12 months	1) CEC People's Survey (Transport question) Also 4.7% people cycle to work (Edinburgh by Numbers)	5 years
Liveable	1) Measurement of well being 2) Air pollution data /lichen survey 3) Residents' satisfaction with Edinburgh as a place to live	1) Office for National Statistics - National Well-being 2) DEFRA - Air pollution levels in major UK cities + RBGE to develop lichen indicator (citizen science) 3) People's Survey	5-10 years
Recreational	% people visiting greenspace, park woodland every week (other than for commuting)	CEC People's survey - Parks question Q12	5 years
Economy	1) Tourism 2) GS indicator?	Visit Scotland	5 years
Partly self-sufficient	1) Area of land devoted to growing food 2) % of people growing food (?) 3) Reduction in allotment waiting lists	1) CEC 2) Difficult to determine precise figures without census/survey 3) CEC	3 years
Clean and healthy	1) Life expectancy of residents 2) Life quality	1) National Records of Scotland 2) People's Survey: Residents' satisfaction with Edinburgh as a place to live / Office for National Statistics - National Well-being	1) May take a generation (e.g. 20-25 years) 2) At least 5 years
Biologically diverse	1) Species indicator such as birds/wild pollinators abundance 2) % reduction in total area covered by invasive non-native species	1) BBS / Local recording groups/Edinburgh University (for wild pollinators) 2) CEC owned land -baseline will be what is present now	1) 5 years 2) 3 years + depending on when removal programme starts
Inclusive and democratic	<i>% of people who feel they are able to have a say on local issues or how services are run</i>	CEC People's Survey (Q29)	5 years

Educational	1) No of Eco schools with green flag status 2) No of schools using outdoor greenspace as educational tool at least once a week?	1) CEC 2) CEC/school survey	Depends on implementation of ELL educational project
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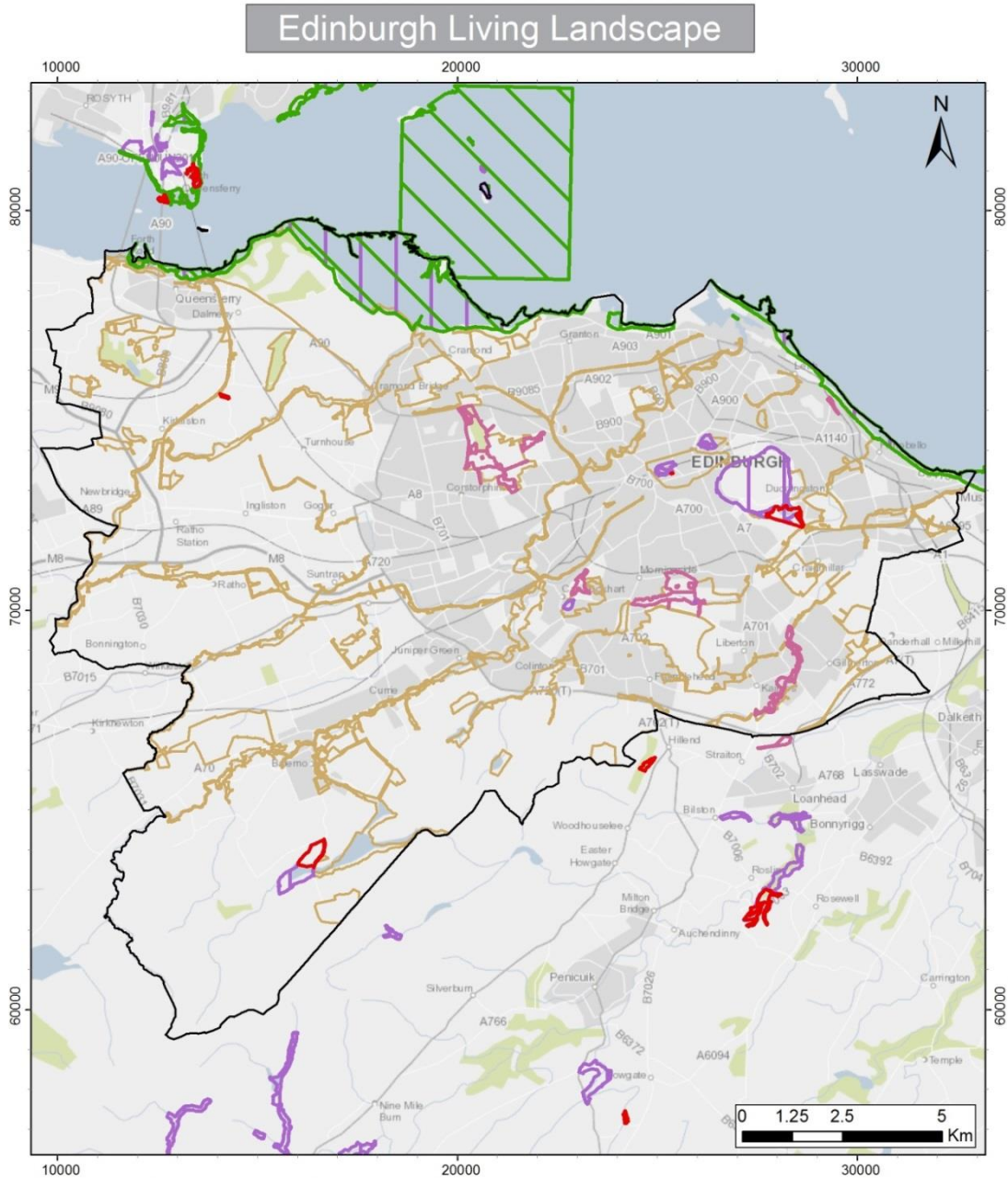
Dr Maggie Keegan, Programme Director Edinburgh Living Landscape

Head of Policy and Planning



Appendix 1

Map showing Edinburgh Living Landscape boundary (in black) and areas of statutory and non-statutory greenspace (note that the boundaries of Local Nature Conservation Sites include Local Biodiversity Sites and Local Geodiversity Site; the boundaries are also currently being reviewed)



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Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| City of Edinburgh Council boundary | Local Nature Reserve |
| Special Protection Area | Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest | Local Nature Conservation Site |