

# Saughton Park Restoration Project:

## INFORMATION BRIEFING

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Saughton Park and Gardens has a unique heritage. It's one of Edinburgh's six 'Premier Parks' but now needs investment to restore it to its former glory and develop its status as a major visitor attraction.

### History

It was originally laid out in the 17<sup>th</sup> century on the estate of Saughtonhall House, which was then used as an asylum for wealthy patients, innovatively using the gardens as an early form of horticultural therapy. Between 1900 and 1905 it was purchased by the Council to provide recreational space for the expanding working class of Gorgie and Saughton. Within a few years it was re-designed to accommodate the 1908 Scottish National Exhibition. This was a massively successful undertaking attracting 3.5 million paying customers who were entertained and educated by an array of exhibitions, attractions, recreations and amusements.

The Exhibition left a significant legacy in terms of form, features and recreational demand, financing new park entrances, a footpath network, sporting facilities, a bandstand and a winter garden and a botanical garden. It is these core elements and the spirit of the time that we are seeking to renew and re-capture for a modern park-going population.

### The Restoration Project

In July 2013 the Council was awarded a £392,000 [Heritage Lottery Fund \(HLF\) 'Parks for People'](#) round one development grant. This enabled the

development of detailed Master Plan proposals for the park which included detailed designs for buildings and landscape, a detailed Conservation Management Plan, Activity Plan, Visitor Services Business Plan and 10-year fully costed Management & Maintenance Plan. These proposals were used to support a round two bid application for the funding to carry out the restoration works.

In January 2016 the Council received the good news that the bid was successful and was awarded £3.8 million funding to deliver the proposed restoration and improvement works. This represents 73% of the total cash costs which is estimated to be £5.2 million. Match funding is made up of £899,000 from the council capital programme budget and external funding of £200,000. The value of any increased management and maintenance costs for up to 5 years, a total of £313,000, is also being used as match funding for the HLF bid.

### What will be done

The project will restore the park to its former glory as a major visitor destination which showcases horticultural excellence and offers exceptional recreational and visitor facilities, opportunities for learning and volunteering and engenders a sense of pride in the neighbouring communities.

Wide ranging public consultation and research has been carried out which has informed the development of the Master Plan proposals, which includes the following:

- Restoration of the walled garden and winter garden;
- Reinstatement of the bandstand;
- Restoration of the stables as a new community venue and base for our partners, the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society;
- Building new cafe and public toilet facilities;
- Conserving and/or bringing into active management all trees, woodlands and hedges and improving biodiversity across the site;
- Repairing and/or installing furniture, lighting, paths and signage;
- Improving entrances and developing circuit routes for walking, running and health activities;
- Putting management and maintenance regimes in place to ensure park achieves Green Flag status;
- Developing a full programme of events and activities which meets the needs and interests of a wide range of park users and offers volunteer and learning opportunities for all to enjoy; and
- Separate to the HLF project, we will also be improving the car parks, boundaries, sports pitches and installing a new micro-hydro scheme and ground source heating system, subject to funding.

Our proposals will deliver the HLF 'Parks for People' project outcomes. These are:

**HLF Outcomes for heritage:** Our heritage will be better managed, in better condition, be better interpreted and explained and be identified / recorded.

**HLF Outcomes for people:** People will have developed skills, learnt about heritage and have volunteered time.

**HLF Outcome for Communities:** Local community will be a better place to live, work or visit, negative environmental impacts will be reduced and more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with the heritage.

### For more information

Log on to the project website

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/saughtonpark](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/saughtonpark)

Email Linda Anglin – Project Manager

[linda.anglin@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:linda.anglin@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Email Peter McDougall – Project Development

Officer [peter.mcdougall@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:peter.mcdougall@edinburgh.gov.uk)

## Timescales

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| Feasibility Stage – Jan 2012 to Feb 2013 |   |
| Jan 2012 to Jan 2013                     | Preparation of HLF 1 <sup>st</sup> round bid application                                |
| Feb 2013 to Jul 2013                     | Submission of HLF 1 <sup>st</sup> round bid application and received decision in July   |
| Development Stage – Aug 2013 to Aug 2015 |   |
| Feb 2014                                 | Appointment of Project Manager and Development Officer                                  |
| Aug 2014                                 | Appointment of Design Team  |
| Feb 2014 to Oct 2014                     | Engagement Activities with stakeholders to develop proposals                            |
| Aug 2014 to May 2015                     | Design Development  |
| Mar 2014 to May 2015                     | Activity Plan Development   |
| Dec 2014 to Mar 2015                     | Public Consultation & Engagement on Master Plan   |
| Mar 2015 to Jul 2015                     | Prepare for HLF 2 <sup>nd</sup> round bid application                                   |
| Aug 2015 to Dec 2015                     | Submit HLF 2 <sup>nd</sup> round bid application and received decision in early January |
| Delivery Phase – Jan 2016 to Dec 2020    |   |
| Jan 2016 to Jul 2016                     | Technical designs and tender documents  |
| Jul 2016 to June 2017                    | Procurement of build contractors  |
| July 2017 to Aug 2018                    | Construction Phase  |
| Aug 2018                                 | Restored park re-opens  |
| Aug 2018 to Dec 2020                     | Post construction activities and evaluation   |