

Wee corner of the Old Town to become storytelling garden

Hidden medieval corner of the Old Town is to be transformed

A new storytelling garden, designed and created by local young people, is set to be established next to Trinity Apse, a hidden medieval relic in the heart of the Old Town. The new initiative is part of the EWH Green Heritage project funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, with additional support from the City of Edinburgh Council.

EWH will be working with young people from Panmure St Ann's Centre, the Canongate Youth Project and the Get Ready for Work scheme, which helps people aged 16-18 who are not in training, education or employment. The young people will be attending horticultural training, gardening workshops and biodiversity activities to gain the appropriate skills. There will also be an opportunity for hands-on training in conservation, through work to the decorative stones still on site.

The finished garden will be used as a community space for organic gardening with the help of the Patrick Geddes Gardening Club, but also as an atmospheric setting for storytelling sessions and drama workshops.

Naomi Webster, Green Heritage Youth Officer for Edinburgh World Heritage said: -"This project is a great opportunity to involve young people in regenerating a corner of the World Heritage Site, and to create something that all the community

will enjoy. Trinity Apse is also one of the treasures of the city, and its quirky history deserves to be properly told. ”

Councillor Richard Lewis, Culture Convener, City of Edinburgh Council, said: “The creation of Trinity Apse Garden is a fascinating project, combining education and practical experience with conservation and archaeology to create a brand new and quite unique visitor attraction in the heart of our Old Town. I look forward to enjoying the finished product in the summer.”

An additional part of the project will be to interpret the rich history of Trinity Apse for visitors. It was originally part of Trinity College Kirk, built around 1460 but then taken down in 1848 to make way for Waverley Station. In the 1870s the apse was reconstructed in the Old Town as part of a new church, but in the 1960s this was demolished leaving behind just the medieval building.

The important role that this medieval building plays in Edinburgh’s history will be reflected in the choice of heritage plants for the garden, as well as the incorporation of archaeology currently on the site into the design.

The project is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council and its near neighbours the Scottish Book Trust, the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Carrubbers Christian Centre and the Cockburn Association.