

# Millennium Woods celebrates 20th birthday



An event was held today at Craigmillar Castle Park to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Millennium Woods.

Cllr Lesley Hinds and some local school children helped to plant three new trees to mark the occasion.

In 1996 the City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with Craigmillar Initiative, succeeded in developing one of the first projects to be funded by the Millennium Commission as part of the Millennium Forest for Scotland Project.

A key objective of the new planting was to increase the amount of the local woodland resource which provides ecological and environmental benefits. The aim was to turn areas of green desert into an enhanced local amenity with a diverse habitat which improves the recreation and educational resources in the area as well as reducing pollution.

It was designed to promote active citizenship and civic pride, to engender a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the new woodlands. The Craigmillar Urban Forest project involved planting 39,650 new trees in the Craigmillar Castle Park, over a 3 day period with the help of 2,332 volunteers.

3 new mature trees will be planted to help mark the occasion which have been chosen by local children. ELGT engaged the local primary schools in choosing the trees by running workshops in the local schools. Children were able to see tree saplings and images of what they will look like fully grown. The schools were then given an opportunity to vote on which types of trees they would like to see planted. The schools have been looking forward to attending the event along with

the local community.

Charlie Cumming, Edinburgh & Lothian's Greenspace Trust, Chief Executive, said: "I am delighted to help celebrate the millennium woodland project with some of the people who helped plant the trees 20 years ago. The woodlands have enhanced and become part of the local landscape over the last 20 years and their use by the local community and visitors will hopefully continue to increase over the coming years. It is great to see the local community using and learning about the local woodlands through our Craigmillar Woodland Engagement project"

Councillor Hinds, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the legacy of this scheme, which is evident in the healthy woodland to have grown up here over the last 20 years. By involving local children to contribute to this, Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust are bringing the environmental, educational and social benefits of this community project to a new generation."

David Jamieson, Parks and Greenspace Manager, said: "The Edinburgh Plantathon was an incredible weekend for Edinburgh. Thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds turned up in high spirits to do their bit for their local environment. Two decades later we have a wonderful woodland for the people of Craigmillar and a great home for the city's wildlife. The Plantathon catalysed the planting of many other woodlands across the city, and no doubt inspired many people onto further environmental and community activity".

