

Help the council care for the city's parks

If you go down to the park today the council would like you to take care against causing fires there.

The Parks and Greenspace team have issued a timely reminder that even small sparks can turn into large fires which can damage local greenery and wildlife.

So if you do go then you are asked to leave no trace by clearing away your rubbish and disposing of cigarettes safely.



Transport and Environment Convener, Councillor Lesley Macinnes, said: "In Edinburgh we are lucky to have such a wealth of parks and greenspaces, many of which offer areas of particular natural beauty and biodiversity.

"Of course it's fantastic that residents and visitors to the Capital can enjoy these beautiful spaces, but I would encourage the public to treat them with care, ensuring they remain as welcoming to wildlife and people as they have always been."

Natural Heritage Officer, David Kyles, added: "Fires can be devastating in parks and other more rural and upland areas. The breeding season for birds, between March and July and sometimes seasonally later, is a particularly vulnerable time for nesting birds, especially those that nest on or close to the ground.

"Fires that devastate areas can pose knock-on problems whereby small mammal populations can be significantly harmed, posing localised food shortage, loss of shelter and other sources of food and the general loss of habitat. Please act responsibly when out in Edinburgh's countryside sites."

The council is particularly keen to ensure that the areas used for picnics and BBQs are highlighted to the public; these include Corstorphine Hill Nature Reserve, Easter Craiglockhart Hill Local Nature Reserve and Colinton Dell.

There are many ground-nesting birds which would be particularly vulnerable if the low-lying shrubbery in the parks caught fire.

Kenneth Rogers, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Local

Senior Officer for Edinburgh, said: "Grass and wildfires are a common risk at this time of year when warmer weather dries out vegetation and grassland – which offers an ample fuel source. Just one heat source like a campfire ember can cause it to ignite and the if the wind changes direction even the smallest fire can spread uncontrollably and devastate entire hillsides. "In the unfortunate instance that a fire is set deliberately, SFRS resources can be diverted from real emergencies. Through robust strategic planning we will always be able to respond to an emergency, however the fact remains that these fires can present a very real danger to our communities."

Safety reminders :

- Don't put your disposable BBQ on the grass – raise it upon bricks or sand
- No campfires are permitted in woodland or shrubby areas.
- If you build a fire then do so away from trees and bushes
- Do not leave a fire unattended
- Build a fire ring with stones around it to contain the fire
- Extinguish the fire before you leave the park