

Saughton Park restoration project making progress

The council's £6.7 million restoration project at Saughton Park is coming along nicely, but it will not open to the public till August with some parts only due to be completed at the end of the year.



Councillor Cathy Fullerton; Pete McDougall, Project Development Officer (CEC), Linda Anglin, Project Manager (CEC), Danny McKibbens, Clark Construction Manager, Councillor Karen Doran, Transport and Environment Vice Convener and Dario Cerretti Clark Contracts Manager.

The Edinburgh Reporter visited the park recently with Councillor Karen Doran Vice-Convener of Transport and Environment and local councillor Cathy Fullerton.



August 2017 Transport and Environment Convener Lesley Macinnes and The Rt Hon Lord Provost Frank Ross



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August 2017 The official start of restoration work at Saughton Park costing

We were at the ceremony last year when the project began (although perhaps the garden looked a little prettier then than it does at the moment!)

The plan is to refurbish the Winter Garden, build a new café, replant some of the floral beds, provide new garden furniture and also to renovate the fabulous bandstand. Now thousands of roses and shrubs have been planted and when we visited work was progressing on the 110 year-old bandstand.

The work in the park will continue for at least another six months providing buildings and areas for use by community groups. The former stable block is the base for that part of the scheme which is being partnered by The Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society.

Michael Scanlan, Director, Clark Contracts, said: "It is fantastic to be working on this exciting regeneration project at Saughton Park. We are looking forward to seeing the park being enjoyed again by local community."



Cllr Cathy Fullerton, Cllr Karen Doran Vice-Convener of Transport and Environment, Pete McDougall Project Development Officer and Linda Anglin, Project Manager at Saughton Park.

Councillor Karen Doran told us how pleased she was to see the work progressing. She said : “What a great resource this will be, and yes even these days we still really need bandstands. There is over £7 million being spent on this project with grants and funding support from a variety of organisations and in my view it is well worth every penny.

“There is going to be an Italian garden, a café and a community area, and various groups are working in Saughton at the moment helping to develop the place for the community.”

The work at Saughton Park is progressing. The £6.7million project will restore the gardens and provide buildings for community use. We spoke to [@KarenDoran3](#) about the progress <pic.twitter.com/umDpFV8NUX>

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [June 17, 2018](#)



Vice-Convener of Transport and Environment Cllr Karen Doran, Cllr Cathy Fullerton, Pete McDougall Project Development Officer and Linda Anglin, Project Manager at Saughton Park

Pete McDougall is the Council's Project Development Officer at Saughton Park. He is in charge of the day to day and enjoys this 'hugely'. He told The Edinburgh Reporter : "I have worked here for four years. I was employed to help deliver the project and I think I have the best job in the world. I love it.

"This is an exciting phase at the moment. We are now well through the construction phase and there are lots of changes happening which, until now, only existed in two dimensions on paper. What really excites me about this is what the park will do for people. It will bring people into the park where we have an exciting range of activities planned.

"There is a really active Friends of Saughton Park group who run garden parties. There is a Scottish physic garden which will be used for learning and teaching. There are nine really big raised beds there, each one used for growing medicinal plants which pertain to a set of ailments or a part of the body. This is yet another way of getting people interested in

growing things.

“We have six beehives coming and we will run beekeeping courses. The Caley will be based here and they will do so much to promote horticulture and teach people about how to grow things.

“The Friends have a community orchard where there are over 100 fruit trees. They have apples, pears, plums and quinces which they will be using to make jams.

“Although the landscaping here will finish in August when the bulk of the park will reopen, the buildings work will not be complete till November or December. We hope they will be finished in time for the Friends of Saughton Park Christmas event.”

The funding for the park restoration is partly provided by Heritage Lottery who awarded £3.8 million and also £99,000 provided by WREN's FCC Scottish Action Fund. (WREN is a company limited by guarantee and a non-profit company registered to fund projects which are eligible under the Landfill Communities Fund and Scottish Landfill Communities Fund.)

An additional £50,000 was provided by SUEZ Communities Trust who support community and environmental improvement projects. This is the maximum funding they provide for any individual project.



Work in progress at Saughton Park June 2018

HISTORY

First established in the 17th century on the grounds of Saughtonhall House, which later became an asylum, the gardens were purchased by the Council in the early 1900s for recreational use by the people of Gorgie and Saughton.

In 1908, Saughton Park was redesigned to accommodate the Scottish National Exhibition, when more than 3.5m visitors flocked to enjoy the attractions. It is hoped that the park's restoration will recapture the spirit of the time, refreshing some of the key features installed for the Exhibition, including the bandstand, botanic garden and winter garden.

MASTERPLAN

The Saughton Park masterplan includes:

- Restoration of the walled garden and winter garden;
- Reinstatement of the bandstand
- Restoration of the stables as a new community venue and base for the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society
- Construction of a new cafe and public toilet facilities;
- Conserving all trees, woodlands and hedges and improving

biodiversity across the site

- Repairing and/or installing furniture, lighting, paths and signage
- Improving car parks, 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
- Separate to the Heritage Lottery Fund project, it is also planned to improve the children's playground, and to install a new micro-hydro scheme and ground source heating system.

