

Taking Princes Street Gardens to a new level

The Quaich Project: A space for all in the heart of Edinburgh

We have been talking about this for a long time now. It was back in 2017 that an international design competition was run, and a winner announced. It has taken a bit of time to get some obstacles out of the way but now with a new logo and a new name the fundraising really begins. £25 million is needed to realise the vision of a new Ross Bandstand – the dream of businessman Norman Springford who has already committed £5 million of his own funds to the scheme

The Ross Development Trust today told us that the capital campaign to reimagine West Princes Street Gardens will be called The Quaich Project.

This is inspired by the way the gardens lie in a shallow depression in the form of a quasi human or friendship cup. There is a short animation, voiced over by Game of Thrones actor Iain Glen, (you may swoon now if you are so inclined!) which depicts how the gardens have evolved over time.

This is a new start for the evolution of one of Edinburgh's most famous landmark locations.

[The Quaich Project](#) aims 'to bring people together in new ways to celebrate one of Scotland's finest green spaces, and Edinburgh's status as one the world's most beautiful, vibrant and welcoming capitals, generating new connections both locally and internationally'.



A SPACE FOR ALL
IN THE HEART OF EDINBURGH

West Princes Street Gardens sit right at the heart of one of Scotland's five UNESCO World Heritage sites.

We all love the space very much, in the depths of winter with Edinburgh's Hogmanay as much as on a sunny day.

Now it is time to look to the future and improve these for the next generation with better infrastructure, a cafe and spaces indoors and out.

Norman Springford, chairman of the Ross Development Trust said "Our vision is to champion a project to make the gardens truly world class and accessible to all members of the community. Whether a local resident or a visitor, the gardens will welcome all and have something different to offer everyone – young and old. The renewed gardens will offer a more enjoyable and pleasant experience for everyone, whether they're looking for a quiet place to stop and rest, want to enjoy a walk in the shadow of one of the world's most iconic castles, or whether they want to enjoy a performance in a stunning venue. The project will provide more accessibility and will improve connections to Princes Street and the wider city. Edinburgh, as Scotland's capital, deserves to have a landmark space that makes a clear statement about the city's status as a welcoming, diverse, historic and forward-thinking destination for all to enjoy. Our ambition is to create a space that says something about us as a nation – a place we can all be proud of."

Cllr Donald Wilson, Convener of Culture and Communities said: "West Princes Gardens are a central and much-loved part of civic life in the city. One of our greatest assets, the gardens are an important public space where everyone should feel welcome and enjoy the beautiful and iconic surroundings."

“The project has already captured the public’s imagination and we have worked with the Ross Development Trust to successfully complete an international design competition for the new Ross Pavilion, upgrade the Gardeners Cottage and restore the Ross Fountain. The Quaich Project will realise the promise of the winning design and ensure enjoyment for generations to come.”

Throughout 2019 and 2020 The Quaich Project will be inviting individuals and organisations to contribute to the project with philanthropic support to give the project the momentum it truly needs prior to the launch of a public fundraising campaign.

The project is currently at an early stage of its design development, building towards a planning application being submitted in early 2020. The Ross Development Trust, in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council, are committed to delivering improvements within the gardens which are supported by what the people of Edinburgh want to see. The Quaich Project will therefore be offering many opportunities for the public to engage with the project over the coming months to help shape how the plans develop.

Jules Haston, Director of Development at the Ross Development Trust said “When our creative agency ‘The Lane’ pitched the name to us we just knew that this felt like the right identity for the project. The Quaich Project is unique, Scottish and perfectly captures the sentiment of our vision. Focusing on friendship will give us a great platform for launching our fundraising campaign. We were also delighted to collaborate with Iain Glen to voice over the animation. His distinctive voice and Edinburgh roots made him a perfect fit for the narrative”.

In 2017 the design concept, led by the architect firm wHY, working in partnership with Edinburgh based design studio GRAS, was unanimously selected as the winner of the

international competition by the jury panel. Mark Thomann, Design Director at wHY said “Our project will celebrate the traditional roots of Scottish hospitality while containing the promise of good times yet to come in the heart of the city. The Quaich becomes a visual and spatial representation of this connection between the land and the people, fashioned from the unique terrain and flavour of Scottish history.”

