

New National Fund Award for Edinburgh's Parks

Scotland's Capital was yesterday [17 June 2019] announced as one of eight urban areas to share in £11 million worth of funding to secure the future of the UK's parks and greenspaces.

The new Future Parks fund is a pioneering programme designed to find sustainable ways to manage and fund parks and open spaces across entire towns and cities.

The fund was launched today by the National Trust and National Heritage Lottery Fund, with support from the UK government.

Across the UK, the Future Parks initiative is investing more than £6m of National Lottery and government funding, and £5m worth of advice and support from some of the country's leading experts in conservation, fundraising, volunteering and green space management from the National Trust. In Scotland the programme is being supported by the National Trust for Scotland.

Edinburgh was one of 81 councils and communities from across the UK to apply for the funding and is the only Scottish city to be successful, with an award of £899,500.



Princes' Street Gardens (ECC)

Alongside the Council, bid partners were: greenspace scotland, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust, University of Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Green Spaces Forum (the umbrella group for Edinburgh's friends of parks groups).

The funding will be used to work collectively and collaboratively with numerous partner organisations, community groups and members of the public to develop an ambitious 30-year strategy for the city's parks and greenspaces so that they continue to flourish well into the future.

Aligned with the Edinburgh 2050 City Vision, the aim of the strategy is to arrive at a new way of working to ensure parks and greenspaces' ongoing enhancement, protection and care.

Other places which have been successful are: Birmingham, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Bristol, Cambridgeshire, Edinburgh, Islington and Camden, Nottingham and Plymouth.

City of Edinburgh Council Parks Leader Councillor Karen Doran said: “Edinburgh is already a wonderfully green city – the UK’s greenest, in fact – and we want to ensure it remains that way for generations to come. Thanks to this much-sought-after funding we’ll be able to tackle this challenge directly with the public, together with our partners on the bid, to explore what it means to be a thriving green city.

“Our work will determine how we change and adapt the ways in which we manage our parks and greenspaces, to ensure that they continue to play an active role in delivering benefits in areas such as health and wellbeing, active travel, biodiversity, recreation and social cohesion. We know our parks and greenspaces offer solutions for many of the environmental and social challenges we face today, and this funding offers the opportunity to ensure that these benefits are experienced by as many of our residents and visitors as possible for generations to come.

“Thriving Green Spaces promises to be an exciting, challenging and rewarding project for everyone who gets involved and we can’t wait to get cracking.”

Stuart Brooks, Head of Conservation and Policy at the National Trust for Scotland, said: “Edinburgh has a wealth of cultural and natural heritage within its parks and greenspaces which benefit everyone. Future Parks will secure and expand these benefits through a partnership that shares a positive vision for places and people.”

“This is why we are so delighted to play our part in this far-sighted initiative and we commend Edinburgh’s foresight and ambition. Re-thinking our parks and the role they play in our lives is vital to the sustainable future and liveability of cities.”



Pentlands in Winter (JLP)

Julie Procter, greenspace scotland, said: “Parks and greenspaces make a big difference to our quality of life, but across the UK parks are under pressure.

“We’re therefore delighted to work with the City of Edinburgh Council and partners on this innovative and ground-breaking project to develop an ambitious, long-term, strategic approach to managing, resourcing and animating the city’s greenspaces.

“Through greenspace scotland’s work with the Scottish Park Managers Forum and greenspace networks, the learning from Thriving Green Spaces will be shared widely with other Councils and communities to ensure Scotland’s parks continue to thrive and benefit future generations.”

Charlie Cumming, Chief Executive, Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust, said “ We are delighted to be working in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council and other partner organisations to develop a strategic and sustainable approach to help improve Edinburgh’s greenspaces for future generations. We will look to work with local communities to ensure that their views on parks and their future management are central to the plans so that Edinburgh’s wonderful

greenspaces remain fit for purpose and enjoyable for everyone.”

Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainability at the University of Edinburgh, said: “The University continually seeks to strengthen its relationships with the people and city it is a part of. We are delighted to be a part of this exciting project and look forward to shaping a positive, innovative vision for the green spaces of the future, which are vital for wellbeing, health and nature.”

Jo Pike, Chief Executive of the Scottish Wildlife Trust, said: “This important funding award will support innovation and help partners to identify new ways of ensuring that Edinburgh’s parks and greenspaces can deliver maximum benefits for people and wildlife. This is a positive step towards Edinburgh Living Landscape’s long-term vision of ensuring that nature is at the heart of the city’s future.”