

Celebrating 350 years of the Botanics

The Botanics is a favourite place to go for a walk in Edinburgh at any time of the year.

On Wednesday of this week Jeremy Balfour MSP wished the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) a happy 350th birthday and praised them for their inclusivity and accessibility during a debate in the Scottish Parliament.

RBGE is one of the top four botanic gardens in the world. Its living collection is home to 13,500 plant species while its world-renowned herbarium contains 3 million preserved plant specimens.

Mr Balfour, who tabled the anniversary debate, spoke about how he loved trips to the garden as a child where he would run around “pretending to be Tarzan”, and how he still takes great joy in visits to the garden with his children.

He praised staff and organisers at the gardens for their recent “Christmas at the Botanics” event, where visitors came from near and far to see the garden illuminated with colourful lights.

Mr Balfour continued : “For 350 years families in Edinburgh have enjoyed trips to the Royal Botanic Garden, which has been responsible for teaching generation upon generation about the importance of protecting and nurturing plants, and about the global challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.

“What I am particularly struck by is its accessibility – providing peace and tranquillity for the 12 percent of

visitors who have long-standing health problems or disabilities.

“I hope that Edinburgh locals and visitors can continue to enjoy this national treasure for another 350 years.”

