

Rusty planters to be removed from Leith Walk

The council is to remove the rusty planters placed on Leith Walk as part of Trams to Newhaven.

There are 46 planters made of COR-TEN steel placed on Leith Walk as part of the tram project. The finish which gives them a rusty look, and which means the surface never requires to be painted, has been the subject of much comment on social media, and mainly as a result of the public reaction, most of these will now be replaced.

But the sad news is that of the 46 trees planted, 16 have been snapped in half – and the council accuses members of the public.

The planters are also filled with litter and cigarette butts, they have been covered in graffiti – although some locals have used them to plant vegetables and herbs.

Following a discussion with the parks team it has been decided to move the planters to park locations and to disused bowling greens where they can be set up as mini allotments. Possible locations include Leith Links, Inverleith Park, Saughton Park, Inch Park, and St Mark's Park. Some may however be left in place if locals can help to maintain them.

Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport Convener, said: "With the level of vandalism that these are attracting the council cannot continue to support them, so we have made the decision to remove them. They will then be used elsewhere as allotment space where there is demand. There are some smaller planters

in this style in my ward in Colinton and they have been there for many years where I think most people like them.”

The council will also look at ways of introducing additional trees on the route adding to their contribution to the Edinburgh Million tree project. And the council will also work with community councils to find alternatives for Leith Walk.

The council contractor SFN used planters as council officers say “utilities under pavements made it impossible to install tree pits and trees”. The tram route was dug up not once but twice and it appears that the contractors failed to identify suitable locations for any trees during those excavations.

