

# **CORSTORPHINE HILL LNR COMMUNITY WALLED GARDEN**

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018-2021**

Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden (“The Walled Garden”) is owned by the City of Edinburgh Council Parks and Greenspace unit and lies within Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve. It is managed and maintained by a group of enthusiastic and hard-working local people called the Friends of Corstorphine Hill. This plan provides information on the garden and is a forward-looking document to guide management of the garden, use resources effectively and promote the natural heritage, ecological value and educational facility of Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden.

The active Friends Group not only manages, maintains and develops the Community Walled Garden but actively assists the City of Edinburgh Council Natural Heritage Officers in the wider context of the garden as part of the Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve. The City of Edinburgh Council Natural Heritage Service manages 12 countryside parks across Edinburgh and the Pentland Hills Regional Park with an emphasis on the conservation of their natural, cultural and historical interests.

The Friends of Corstorphine Hill rely on membership subscriptions, donations, grants from a range of organisations and assistance from the City of Edinburgh Council.

This Management Plan is produced by the Friends of Corstorphine Hill to guide the management of Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden. It supersedes previous management strategies. This fully revised document covers the period 2018 to 2021. It will be updated annually.

### **Wider Policy Context**

The creation of this management plan has taken into consideration a range of different policies to reflect the complex nature of greenspace management. The national and local policies which influence this document include health, biodiversity, sustainable development, and social inclusion. The City of Edinburgh Council web site provides the most current information.

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks) and green spaces

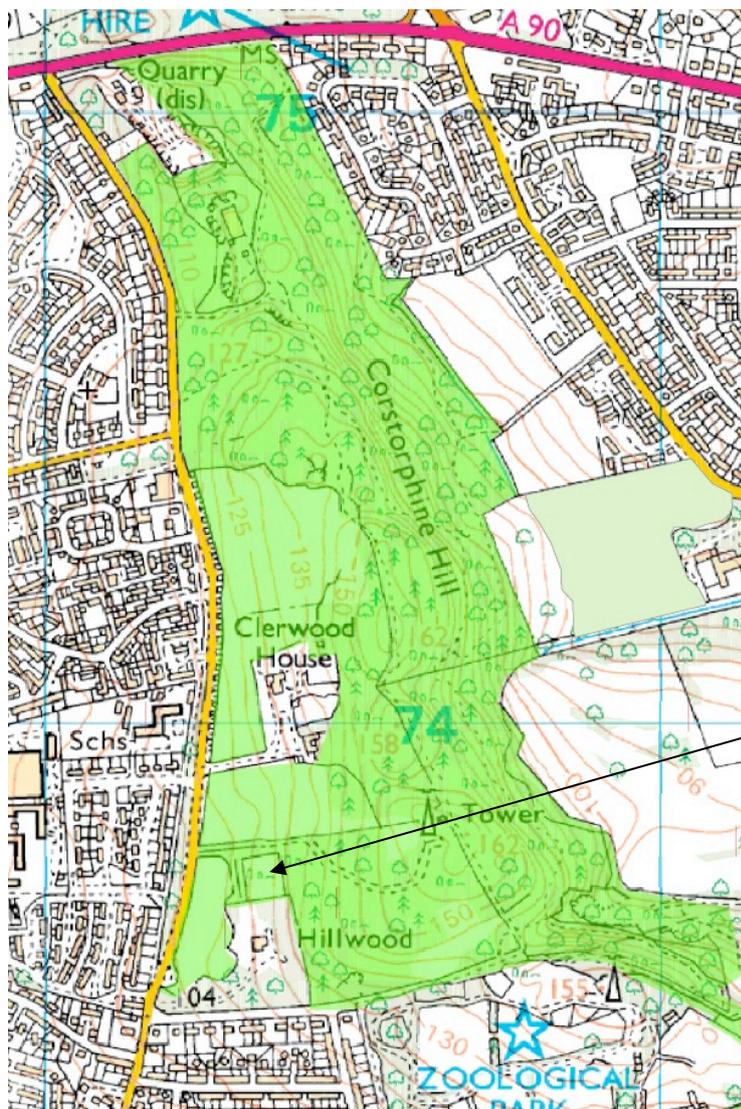
In particular, it should be read in the context of the Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve Management Plan 2017 – 2026.

### **Legal Compliance**

In 1994, Corstorphine Hill (including the then derelict Walled Garden) was declared a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) with the support of the local community. LNR designation is put forward for approval by the local authority in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). A LNR is a place of special local natural interest, set up to protect nature, and for people to enjoy and appreciate. As a Local Nature Reserve is a statutory declaration under Local Agenda 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, it is a very

clear signal to a local community of the local authority's commitment to nature conservation (SNH, 2007).

The walled garden is public open space owned by the City of Edinburgh Council, is within a Local Nature Reserve, recorded Listed Wildlife Site, an Urban Wildlife Site, a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site and Green Belt. Development of the garden was subject to Planning Authority approval and consent was obtained in 2001. The area has been in council ownership since 1927.



Location of Community Walled Garden within Corstorphine Hill LNR

## Site Information

	<b>Description</b>
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	<b>NT 205 743</b>
<b>Ownership</b>	The City of Edinburgh Council, Services for Communities, Parks and Greenspace Unit
<b>Main contacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Kyles, Natural Heritage Service Manager, Hermitage House, Hermitage of Braid, 69a Braid Road, Edinburgh. <a href="mailto:David.Kyles@edinburgh.gov.uk">David.Kyles@edinburgh.gov.uk</a> Inverleith Farmhouse, Inverleith Park, 5 Arboretum Place, Edinburgh, EH3 5NY - 0131 529 2421 / 0131 311 7078 - 07917 174 503 - <a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks_and_green_spaces">http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks_and_green_spaces</a></li> <li>Douglas Cruickshank, Community Parks Officer, West Neighbourhood, Drumbrae Hub <a href="mailto:douglas.cruickshank@edinburgh.gov.uk">douglas.cruickshank@edinburgh.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0131 529 3703</li> <li>• Alan Bell, Parks and Gardens Manager <a href="mailto:alan.bell@edinburgh.gov.uk">alan.bell@edinburgh.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0131 529 7715</li> <li>• David Jamieson, Parks and Greenspace Manager, <a href="mailto:david.jamieson@edinburgh.gov.uk">david.jamieson@edinburgh.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0131 529 7055</li> <li>• Peter Taylor, Secretary, Friends of Corstorphine Hill, <a href="mailto:sheil@blueyonder.co.uk">sheil@blueyonder.co.uk</a> Tel: 0131 336 1628</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local community</li> <li>• Corstorphine Community Council and other adjacent Community Councils</li> <li>• Corstorphine Heritage Trust</li> <li>• Local shops and businesses</li> <li>• Local schools/libraries</li> <li>• The Hub/Rannoch Centre</li> <li>• Edinburgh Capital Hotel</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of main uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green space woodland walk and community garden</li> <li>• Leisure activities such as informal play, bird watching and community gardening</li> <li>• Source for site information, interpretation and historical reference</li> <li>• Picnics and seating</li> <li>• Organised events especially involving the local community</li> <li>• Educational activities</li> </ul>


The recreational value of the area for the users of Corstorphine Hill LNR, citizens of and visitors to Edinburgh is immense, especially for those living in the adjacent community areas of Corstorphine, Drum Brae, Blackhall, Murrayfield and Saughtonhall.

The garden provides an essential space in the heart of Corstorphine Hill LNR. The situation of the garden within the LNR provides users with a healthy recreational area. The design provides ample seating throughout and can provide shelter from the prevailing wind and is accessible to all. The site is particularly welcoming for family groups as it is enclosed, secure and well-behaved dogs are welcomed.

Corstorphine Hill is the largest and perhaps the most valuable of Edinburgh's urban woodlands. It is the Council's second largest property in terms of area and forms a prominent feature of the City's skyline. Generally woodland cover in the Edinburgh City Council area averages only 6% of land area, with most woodlands being small, fragmented areas, mostly privately owned, which do not cater for the public. The significance of a large, accessible area of continuous woodland with the microcosm that is the Community Walled Garden in a highly populated area cannot be overstated.

#### A Brief History

Hillwood House was built in 1872 and was home to the MacKinnon family who were reputed to have received the recipe for *Drambuie* from Bonnie Prince Charlie. The MacKinnons then made their fortune from this and the house became corporate headquarters for the Drambuie Liqueur Company around this time. Edinburgh Corporation purchased the property in 1935 and then sold it on in 1968. Prior to 1935 it is believed that the walled garden was worked as a kitchen garden supplying the house with vegetables, herbs and fruit, around the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War when many green areas in the City of Edinburgh were turned over for production of staple foodstuffs. It is presumed that the walled garden associated with Hillwood House was put to the same use. Thereafter the house and grounds fell into a state of disrepair and neglect for a period of approximately 50 years.

With the establishment of the Friends of Corstorphine Hill in 1999, the local community became involved in progressing Corstorphine Hill for the benefits of all users and all wildlife. With a practically minded approach, the Friends became interested in transforming the Walled Garden area back into something like it once was. With this in mind, the City of Edinburgh Council was approached with the idea and gave full support. Funding was sought from a variety of sources, one of the most successful partners being the BBC's Beechgrove Garden team. This work created the layout of the present garden.



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## **Aims**

1. To create and maintain an attractive and interesting garden, while improving and increasing the habitats and biodiversity within the garden.
2. To monitor and improve Health and Safety aspects for the benefit of visitors and gardeners.
3. To promote local community involvement in all aspects of the site.
4. To encourage more visitors to the garden.
5. To promote study and educational environmental opportunities for visitors.
6. To broaden the garden's accessibility and appeal.

# **CORSTORPHINE HILL LNR COMMUNITY WALLED GARDEN WORK PLAN**

## ***UPDATED FOR 2018***

### **A: FABRIC AND EQUIPMENT**

1. Routine maintenance of petrol mowers and strimmer
2. Secure storage and training in use; invasive species control equipment
3. General path, decking and seat maintenance, disposal of refuse
4. Maintenance of timber and metal seating
5. Manage and operate rota for gate opening and locking on a daily basis.
6. Installation and Maintenance of sign at gate, Green Flag pole and directional signs.
7. Monitor condition of stone perimeter wall, initiating work as required.
8. Monitor condition of wooden decking, initiating work as required.

### **B: PLANTING AND GARDEN WORK**

1. Regular mowing of grass areas
2. Weeding and tidying of planted areas
3. Removal of winter 'brown' and other debris as required
4. Mulching of shrubs as selected
5. Further planting of new climbers, south facing wall (west section) and west facing wall.
6. Plant group of hamamelis mollis shrubs (for winter colour esp.)  
in herbaceous border (NE quarter)
7. Prune dogwood 'hedge' in Spring, and rose hedge as required (W side).
8. Refresh 'herb/sensory' area (E of carved bench)
9. Reduce number of young oak trees (SE quarter)
10. Significant reductions in shade in NE quarter, by removing and/or replacing specific  
overlarge trees, as agreed.
11. Maintain and extend planting of shady south east corner with shade tolerant plants and  
ferns.
12. Prune shrubs seasonally as necessary.
13. Planting of various new shrubs of interest especially in south-facing north plot.
14. Development of "Tower" bed area.
15. Retain informal areas for natural regeneration, strimming seasonally.
16. Continue production and use of compost and mulching materials.
17. Plant with bees, butterflies and birds in mind.
18. Maintain the informal hibernaculum.

### **C: OTHER ACTIVITIES/**

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1. Continue and renew provision of information about plants.
2. Develop "Plant of the Month" signs changed regularly.
3. Maintain information about the Garden on FOCH web site.
4. Keep Information Notice Board up to date.
5. Attract more volunteers e.g. posters in libraries.

## Finance

Expenditure on plant purchases and other items is met from FOCH funds.  
Grants will continue to be sought as required from a range of sources for major projects.

## Monitoring & Reviewing

An online survey and a questionnaire on site is operated by the CEC's Parks and Greenspace Service is in place for the city's parks and gardens which includes Corstorphine Hill. The Green Flag system provides an independent assessment. See the CEC web site and the Green Flag site for latest information.

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20065/conservation/247/biodiversity\\_in\\_edinburgh](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20065/conservation/247/biodiversity_in_edinburgh) .