

The City of Edinburgh Council Annual Allotment Report 2021/22

Introduction

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“the Act”) encourages local authorities to support the development of community food growing spaces including allotments. Allotments and other grow-your-own initiatives help deliver many benefits including improved health and well-being but also social interaction. Edinburgh approved a food-growing strategy, [Growing locally](#), in 2021 with three key objectives:

- To grow more food in Edinburgh
- To encourage people to buy and eat more locally grown food
- To improve awareness and engagement in sustainable food across the city

This was prepared in partnership with key stakeholders setting a clear vision for the future of food growing in the city.

An allotment is defined in Part 9 of the Act as land that:

- is owned or leased by a local authority (or leased or intended for lease by a person from the authority);
- is used or intended for use wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers; and
- is used or is intended for use otherwise than with a view to making a profit. The Act places new duties and functions on public sector authorities including allotment regulations and a requirement to prepare and publish an annual allotments report. The following report is for allotments leased or managed by the City of Edinburgh Council (the Council) for the period 1st April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

The Council’s third strategy [Cultivating Communities - A Growing Success](#) establishes a 10-year strategic framework for allotment development in Edinburgh that supports the requirements placed upon it by part 9 of the Act. Four key objectives are defined within the strategy:

- Ensure adequate provision of allotments
- Develop a robust management system for allotments
- Improve the allotment customer experience
- Adoption of revised allotment regulations

The strategies are supported by Council Commitment 44 to Increase allotment provision and support and expand the network and the number of community gardens and food growing initiatives.

Key Achievements 2021/22

- New Allotment Regulations to control the allotments managed by the Council were approved by the Culture and Communities Committee on the 15 June 2021. The regulations were developed following Scottish Government guidance and consultees included the city's allotmenters, the Federations of Edinburgh District Allotments and Gardens Associations (FEDAGA) and the Scottish Allotment Gardens Society.
- A new allotment site was opened at Newcraighall adding a further 26 allotment plots to the Council's stock.
- Through support from community benefits and local allotment associations biodiversity areas have been developed at Barnscourt and Stenhouse Allotments.
- A Nature Restoration Fund resourced composting shredders for Warriston and West Main allotments, the shredders will encourage the recycle of green waste and curtail the use of bonfires. The fund has supported the introduction of water harvesting equipment at Warriston, Saughton, Ferry Road and Claremount Park Allotments.
- An infrastructure capital investment programme funded the replacement of 290 metres of security fencing at Warriston Allotment.

Allotment Sites

The City of Edinburgh Council (the Council) directly manages 32 allotment sites as listed in the table below which highlights locations, approximate sites sizes and the number of operational plots on each site.

Site	Owner	Managed	Area (m2)	Plot allocated 03/02/2022
Baronscourt	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	3,304	20
Bridgend	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	14,623	56
Cambridge Avenue	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	1,649	10
Carricknowe	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	8,493	46
Chesser Crescent	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	2,264	14
Claremont Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	9,692	62
Craigentiny	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	7,291	47
Drumbrae 1 & 2	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	961	20
Dumbryden	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	6,470	36
Ferry Rd	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	13,891	77
Findlay Av	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	1,694	6
Hutchinson Loan	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	834	10
Inchkeith Court	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	382	9
India Place	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	1,343	23
Inverleith Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	24,492	186
Kirkliston	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	445	7
Lady Road	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	6,102	38
Leith Links	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	5,134	35
Lochend Square	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	#N/A	24
Newcraighall	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	#N/A	26
Northfield Drive	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	2,550	19
Piershill Square	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	#N/A	9
Pilrig Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	4,356	42
Prospect Bank	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	1,653	12
Redhall	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	12,760	51
Restalrig	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	5,658	31
Saughton	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	35,370	184
Stenhouse	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	7,045	71
Victoria Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	2,082	16
Warriston	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	31,996	129
West Mains	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	17,742	103
Midmar	Leased to Council	Parks and Greenspace	25,150	183

Period of Lease and Annual Rent

The period of any lease between the Council and an allotment tenant is from the date of entry until January each year and thereafter yearly until terminated. When determining the level of rent the Council takes account of the size of the Allotment Plot and an individual's circumstances. The annual fees to rent an allotment plot from April 2021 to March 2022 are as follows:

Area	Detail	Charge
Allotment Rentals	Full Plot	£132.00
Allotment Rentals	Half Plot	£66.00
Allotment Rentals	Elderly, Students and Unemployed - Full Plot	£66.00
Allotment Rentals	Elderly, Students and Unemployed - Half Plot	£33.00

Waiting Lists

The Act requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to ensure the number of applicants on their allotment waiting list is no more than half of the total number of allotment plots and that an applicant is not on the waiting list for a continuous period of more than 5 years. Recently there has been a significant increase in the number of applications for allotments with one factor identified as being the consequence of the Coronavirus lockdown restrictions. Lockdown has resulted in more people wishing to be outdoors in the natural environment. The waiting list for an allotment was 2,310 in March 2020 (140% of allocation) this increased to 5,658 in November 2021 (352% of allocation).

Next Steps

2022/23 will see the completion of an extension to Leith Links Allotment and it is anticipated that following the success of a consultation exercise funding to convert a second bowling at Victoria Park to an allotment will become available. The recent closure of Prestonfield Bowling Club gives an opportunity to develop the green as an allotment facility and a community engagement exercise will gauge support for this development.

Areas of ground at Clerwood Walled Garden, Gypsy Brae, Fernieside Recreation Ground and Little France Park continue to offer the potential for allotments and Edinburgh and Lothians Green space Trust will continue to support the Council to encourage groups to form to develop these sites.

The integrity of the perimeter stone boundary wall surrounding Redhall Allotment is currently being assessed and once completed remediation works required will be added to the Parks Infrastructure Capital Programme.

Over the last year, the council did not receive any requests to carry out adjustments to meet the needs of a tenant who is a disabled person. It is considered that the Council's allotment sites are accessible by a disabled person and that accessibility to individual plots would vary depending on the person's individual disability.

Income and Expenditure

During the financial year from 2021/22, in connection with allotment sites, the council received income of £116,346 and incurred expenditure of £119,711. The income includes fees for rent and the expenditure includes officer's time and overhead (20%) for the administration and management of the allotment service but excludes capital expenditure and third-party funding support.

Engagement

The Council encourages and supports the creation of constituted allotment associations. The Council works in partnership with FEDAGA to nurture and foster strong community involvement in allotments. The Council encourages tenants on each allotment site to appoint an allotment site representative to engage and provide feedback to the Council and to FEDAGA on their behalf.

Further Information

Allotment letting: -

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/allotmentlettingform>

FEDAGA: -

<https://www.fedaga.org.uk/>