

# Friends of Inverleith Park

OUR update on YOUR Park - Issue 36 Autumn 2021



Photo: Anne Rushbrook

## AGM

**This year's AGM is going to be Monday 29th November 7pm  
in Tanfield Bowling Club, Arboretum Pl, Edinburgh EH3 5NY.**

**Speaker: Chris Rankin, landscape architect for the Team working on a Master Plan for  
Inverleith Park.**

Should Scottish Government advice change, then we will revert to an online Zoom meeting. Please let us know if you are coming as we need to plan the seating for suitable distancing. Non-members also welcome. Email [pambarnes66@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pambarnes66@yahoo.co.uk) to let us know.

**Don't forget to buy your copy (or many copies) of the  
2022 INVERLEITH PARK CALENDAR**

With stunning photographs by Anne Rushbrook and others

Copies cost £5 (still the same price) and are available from  
Borthwick's, Write Stuff, from Pam at 332 4765, Maria at 332 6567,  
Tony at 332 4759, Anne at 332 7090, Joan at 556 7993, Cathy at 332 8707

## **Report from our Convener - Pam Barnes**

### **AGM and the Master Plan for Inverleith Park**

We are looking forward to having a face-to-face AGM once again. This promises to be most interesting as our speaker will be Chris Rankin who is the landscape architect for the Team working on a Master Plan for Inverleith Park. This is your chance to hear about and discuss ideas for what might be done to improve the park - a plan for the next 10 years. The aim is that Chris Rankin will submit a detailed Report by the end of January to the council and the community will be consulted and asked for ideas and to give their opinion on different proposals.

There are some things needed that can be taken for granted - number one - we need public toilets - but where should they go? In recent years, many of Edinburgh's public toilets have been removed, and in many cases the site has been sold. Public toilets are expensive to run and are often not treated properly by some of the public. The latest thinking is that toilets should be combined with a cafe which will ensure that they are kept in reasonable order. In the case of the park - a suitable site could be leased out by the council for a cafe with toilets for the public - with the lease taking into account the costs to the leaseholder. Cafes and restaurants in parks can be very successful and provide great facilities and meeting places for park users of all ages. The large successful cafe recently opened in Saughton Park is a good example.

Inverleith Park has always supported public sport and covid has concentrated official minds on the need for exercise to improve health. However, lots of questions remain. What should be done with the old and dilapidated changing facilities that exist, but are currently not accessible for the public? And what about provisions for older children and teenagers? Can we give them things to do that they would enjoy? Somewhere to hang out that is their place but doesn't leave a chaos of rubbish and shattered glass bottles every weekend for everyone else to clear up. What can we put in for teenagers? Bouldering - very popular? A small skatepark in a suitable place? Don't let the ill-thought-out 'international skatepark' that someone thought would be suitable very near the pond 13 years ago put us off from thinking that a small one might be a huge success - but in the right place. Can the pond area be improved? What do you think?

The Scottish Government and the local authorities are giving Edinburgh parks and green spaces much more attention. It may be a 10 year plan for the park overall but some things will be very do-able even next year. The Friends committee think that a cafe/toilet and incorporating part of the depot into the public part of the park with demolition could be done quite quickly.

### **What about the temporary toilets?**

They were removed at the beginning of November as they are very expensive for the council to hire and the thinking is - that the need is less in the winter. Although soon covered in graffiti on the outside, they were clean and well kept inside. They will be missed.

### **Fund-raising for the play area:**

The fund-raising campaign to improve the children's play area has been delayed but notices are going up around the park soon. There is a consultation on the play area on Inverleith Park's Facebook page. It has had a very good response but do encourage people you know to fill it in. <https://bit.ly/InverleithPark>

### **Gardening in the Sundial Garden:**

Many thanks to the Sundial Garden volunteers for all their efforts every Wednesday morning from 10 am. Come and join us - no gardening knowledge necessary. It's autumn and many plants are dying back for the winter but the year has been much better



Photo: Anne Rushbrook

than we expected - many plants got trampled earlier in the year by people walking over the flower beds and we had a lot of drought but nevertheless we have had a colourful display throughout the summer. All helped by the temporary toilets which meant that people were no longer using the shrubs at the back of the beds for a toilet! Graeme and his Community Payback people who used to help with heavier work

when we needed it are back in very small numbers but we are delighted see them. Community Payback is a scheme whereby individuals are given community time which they have to spend doing things to help the community.

### **Young people in the park:**

Still intermittent problems with gatherings of young people - lots of rubbish is being left in the Sundial Garden with glass bottles deliberately smashed. As ever it's a minority doing this when drunk. The police patrol regularly but there are problems in many other parts of Edinburgh and the police haven't enough manpower to deal with it all.

### **Bin problems:**

We would like to give a big thank you to the Council cleansing teams for responding very quickly when we let them know of rubbish problems - like deliberately overturned black bins or bins in the pond. It must be very frustrating for them knowing that it has been done deliberately by rowdy kids. A big thanks as well to individuals and to some local church and school volunteers who regularly take it upon themselves to pick up litter.

### **Graffiti:**

The graffiti around the park is very upsetting. We have been told that 'perpetrators' are not necessarily teenagers but can be middle-aged people. Some are known to roam the country by train - get off and do their graffiti and get out again! Please Edinburgh Council bring back the graffiti team that used to quickly remove any defacements.

### **The Boardwalk:**

Ritchie Fraser, the Park Manager, has managed to get a grant for renewing the boardwalk area of the pond where the timbers are starting to rot. The work will be done by

Nick Benge of Water Gems who designed and built it in 2006, and we hope that the restoration work will start by the beginning of 2022. The main walkway path across the pond was repaired recently and it is great to think that the whole area will be renewed.

### **Change in our Charitable Status - Joan Beattie**

As you may be aware, we have changed from a SCO (unincorporated charity) to a SCIO (incorporated charity). As a consequence of this we are having to close our current bank account and open a new one in the name of The Friends of Inverleith Park (SCIO) and are in the process of doing this. It seems to take quite a long time and there are several hoops to jump through.

Once we have all the details, I will write to you and ask that you change your standing order to the new bank account. After 15 years of the membership remaining at £3 for a single person and £5 for a family we will be increasing this to £6 for a single person and £10 for a family.

You will not be asked for any further monies for this year if you have paid your membership for 2021/2022 before this change takes place.

I do hope you will continue to support The Friends Group and will let you know the details as soon as possible.

### **Nature Notes - Cathy Bell**

Another autumn is with us turning greens to browns, yellows, oranges and reds.

The pond usually has many gulls, mallards, tufted ducks, swans, coots etc. but sometimes you will have the pleasure of seeing geese, and goosander (ducks) or a heron. Keep an eye out over the winter months, because that is when the Water Rail comes and leads a quiet secret life in the western end of the pond, most visible when on the ice. Kingfishers sometime call in the western end too.

If you look over the wall below the pond into the Accies field (& also from the path above the Grange grounds) you will often see Oystercatchers feeding on the bugs etc in the grass. Today I watched 2 gulls who had joined them, but had a different feeding technique, where they drummed the grass with alternate feet (? sound of rain) and then put their beaks into the ground to feed (worms, I think). There were wagtails on the fields too.

At the allotments the fox has raised her family of 4 and crops seem to be being eaten by voles & mice! There is a new bug around – the Rosemary bug, which can be found on Rosemary & Lavender stripes – not good news!

**To join the Friends:** <http://www.friendsofinverleithpark.co.uk/membership.html>

**Facebook:** Find us on our Facebook page with lots of beautiful photos by Anne Rushbrook - a good place to leave comments and communicate with us.

[www.facebook.com/Save-Inverleith-Park-18092658601438/](http://www.facebook.com/Save-Inverleith-Park-18092658601438/) .

**Online:** [www.friendsofinverleithpark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofinverleithpark.co.uk)