



EDINBURGH GREENSPACES IN 2050

Vision Illustrations inspired by public
“Postcards from 2050” – January 2023

• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

IMAGINING OUR THRIVING GREENSPACES IN 2050

Supplementary Information for the Edinburgh Thriving Greenspaces 2050 Vision and Strategy

The Thriving Greenspaces Project was established in 2019 to fashion a new vision for the city's parks and open spaces that delivers a new way of working to ensure their ongoing enhancement, protection, and care.

This project was made possible by a £1.2m Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the National Trust. The funding enabled us to work with stakeholders to explore options, carry out research, studies

and pilots, and gather robust baseline data about our greenspaces. This informed the production of the Edinburgh Thriving Green Spaces 2025 Strategy and Implementation Action Plan.

The Edinburgh Greenspaces in 2050 document includes four artist illustrations that were inspired by the public 'Postcards from 2050' vision statements.

The illustrations capture a collection of aspirations. They are set against the background of some recognisable Edinburgh landscapes and are not proposals for a specific site.

Edinburgh's Thriving Greenspaces 2050 Vision and Themes

Greenspaces that are at the heart of our communities and help make Edinburgh an outstanding city for wellbeing, quality of life and heritage.

Greenspaces that are connected, thriving, valued and resourced.



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POSTCARDS FROM 2050

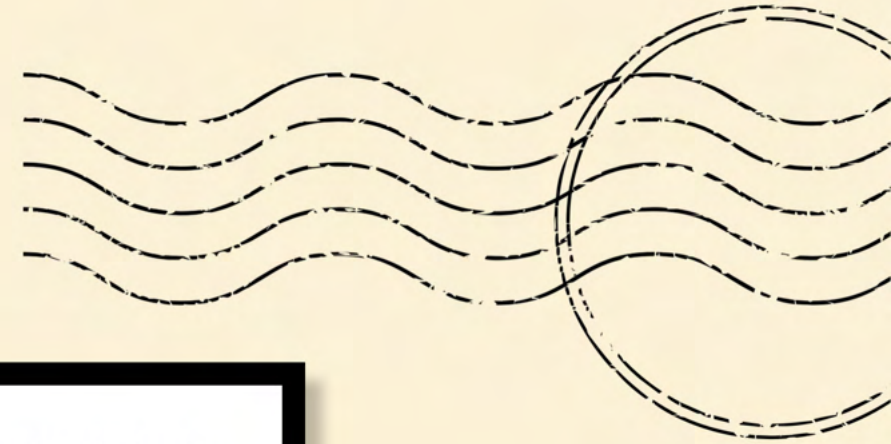
What will our greenspaces look like in 2050?

We all have our own aspirations and we wanted to find out what your visions were for Edinburgh's parks and greenspaces in 2050.

We asked you to...

“Close your eyes and imagine it is 2050. You are on holiday in Edinburgh and are visiting all the parks and greenspaces you remember from 2021. You can't believe what you are seeing, they are everything you always imagined they would be and better. Imagine what they now look like, what facilities they have, what plants and wildlife there is, what people are using them for and what they are enjoying doing there. You dig a little deeper to find out how they are funded, who is looking after them and you are surprised at what you find out. “

Your responses have guided us in the development of the 2050 vision for Edinburgh's greenspaces and we thank you for sharing your postcards with us.



Connected Greenspaces

Greening the Grey





Greening the Grey

Where is the artwork based?

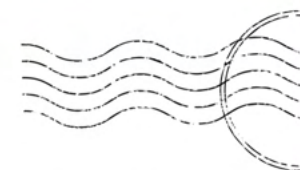
A typical Edinburgh street, full of life and providing connected habitat for many species.

What's happening?

A once grey 'artery' has transformed into a giant, connected green channel. Public and private spaces are bustling, clean, green social areas for humans and wildlife at all times of the day and night. People now have nature on their doorstep, and they can travel along green routes. Species once lost can thrive and feel at home – bats and birds and butterflies are all around and the bus stop is now an important 'buzz stop' for bees and other insects.

This illustration was created by Sarah Hannis and was inspired by the public 'Postcards from the future' vision statements. They are not proposals for a specific space but are just a way to capture a collection of aspirations in one illustration. In most cases, they have been inspired by ideas that have already been implemented in the city and elsewhere.

POSTCARDS FROM 2050



"Edinburgh's green and blue space has expanded since I was last here 20 years ago. There are many green and blue corridors running across the city. Fish can swim end to end from the sea to the top of the Water of Leith. Many rooftops are green, there is green down the side of new office buildings, and there are patches of wildflowers in wee corners between buildings. The gardens where I'm staying have a pond for frogs and a hedgehog corridor, and I'm told this is common. More and more of the tall buildings are swift-friendly. Every bridge is a garden bridge. Edinburgh is known throughout Europe as a wildlife haven, and that's one reason I came back. Surveys of birds, bats, badgers, hedgehogs and otters show thriving sustainable populations. It's amazing. I'm coming back here to live!"

Thriving Greenspaces

Wild swimmers meet wildlife





Wild swimmers meet wildlife

Where is the artwork based?

At a bay along Edinburgh's 27km of coastline which is a thriving haven for seabirds and other coastal species and where communities come together to enjoy the outdoors.

What's happening?

An important Edinburgh seafront is a diverse and animated green and blue space. There is an abundance of wildlife - seals and dolphins can be spotted, seabirds are nesting, and, in the distance, new high-rise housing boasts green walls and roofs. People come year-round to socialise, exercise, play and relax making them healthier and happier.

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POSTCARDS FROM 2050



"You'll never believe the thriving parks and green spaces in Edinburgh these days. I'm so grateful for the accessible and well maintained paths and seating maintained through a combination of private sponsorship and public funding. There are active friends groups and environmental education activities for youngsters. The wildflower meadows are beautiful, and control of gorse has seen many native species thrive. There are lots of mature trees and reintroduction of pine martins has enabled the red squirrel population to thrive. I like the wee cafes and toilet facilities in the more remote parks, which all run on renewable energy and give all profits to the maintenance of the park spaces. I love the wee hides and feeding stations too! Skylarks have returned to the Braid Hills too! What a joy to hear their soaring song. I wish you were here to enjoy it too. Maybe one day soon."

Valued Greenspaces

Where the past meets the present





Where the past meets the present

Where is the artwork based?

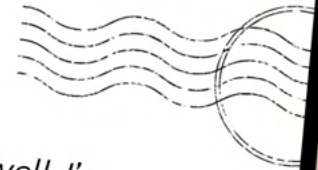
A historic part of our city has found a new purpose as a place where wildlife habitats have been created and people value what is special and unique about this space.

What's happening?

This typical inner-city historic space has been transformed to provide new habitats for some of our most loved wildlife - otters, herons and kingfishers can be spotted in this area. Volunteers look after floating community allotments, monitor wildlife and run tours for visitors. People walk along the canal enjoying the historic sights while children have fun crawling through tunnels and over net bridges.

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POSTCARDS FROM 2050



"As someone who doesn't know the city well, I'm impressed by how easy it is to find and navigate my way around the beautiful parks and green spaces here. They're many and varied, and I've come across plants I've never seen before! Everything is clean and the park rangers and volunteers I've come across are very friendly, helpful and clearly love what they do. There are some great little cafes where you can sit and watch the world go by, some of them even using produce grown within the park itself. There's a real sense of pride and ownership from the local community who play a really active role in deciding how the spaces are managed and looked after."

Resourced Greenspaces

Look after your park and it will look after you





Look after your park and it will look after you

Where is the artwork based?

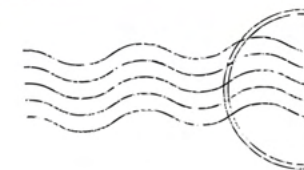
One of Edinburgh's heritage parks has been restored in a way which respects its cultural importance while embracing new technologies and creating an animated space for both wildlife and humans.

What's happening?

One of our parks has been transformed into an amazing asset for the local community providing environmentally sustainable solutions while also providing valuable habitats for our wildlife. From renewable heat to locally grown food to a sustainable venue for a host of activities, this well-managed park is much more than might first meet the eye – ground source heat pumps heat the buildings, robotic mowers keep the lawns looking good and swift boxes provide valuable homes for the swift population.

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POSTCARDS FROM 2050



"To me when I still had hair! The spaces in Edinburgh are now much more beautiful, natural places with greater levels of tree canopy coverage and biodiverse habitats with a greater level and range of wildlife. These spaces are really designed around moving and standing watercourses that are providing habitats themselves but also give a focal point to the enjoyment of the place for visitors. The spaces are well funded with amenities like benches, toilets as well as informal and conventional play areas alongside occasional cafes providing indoor and outdoor dining areas. These facilities are run by the Council and provide income that in turn helps maintain a vibrant and beautiful open space."

Thank you

The Thriving Green Spaces project team would like to thank the Parks and Greenspaces staff, City of Edinburgh Council colleagues, elected members, our bid partners and all the organisations and citizens of Edinburgh who have joined the conversation, shared their vision and contributed to the project.

The Thriving Green Spaces project was made possible by the funding from the 'Future Parks Accelerator' programme and we thank the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Trust and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for supporting our project.



Walking under the autumn canopy at Inverleith Park

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