

# Transport and Environment

10.00am, Tuesday, 25 August 2015

## Progress on Alternative Uses of Bowling Greens

<b>Item number</b>	7.3
<b>Report number</b>	
<b>Executive/routine</b>	
<b>Wards</b>	Corstorphine/Murrayburn Leith Walk Leith Sighthill/Gorgie

### Executive summary

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In 2011, Edinburgh Leisure reported a significant decline in the use of public bowling greens. As a result, a consultation led by the Council in partnership with Edinburgh Leisure was held with the bowling community. This allowed the Council to determine future provision of bowling greens, and to seek views on alternative uses for those greens which may no longer be required.

In January 2014, Committee approved a report recommending a reduction in the number of Council run bowling greens to reflect better the level of usage, and sought feedback on alternative uses. This report updates Committee on progress to date.

### Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	<a href="#">P33</a> , <a href="#">P34</a>
<b>Council outcomes</b>	<a href="#">CO10</a> , <a href="#">CO19</a> , <a href="#">CO23</a>
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<a href="#">SO2</a> , <a href="#">SO4</a>

## Progress on the Alternative Uses of Bowling Greens

### Recommendations

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1.1 It is recommended that Committee note the content of this report.

### Background

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2.1 The City of Edinburgh Council maintained fifteen public bowling greens in five locations:

- Balgreen
- Leith Links
- Powderhall
- St Margarets Park
- Victoria Park.

2.2 As the result of a decline in the number of bowlers using the greens, a consultation was held in late 2012 and early 2013. The aim of this consultation was to ascertain which, if any, sites were surplus to requirements, and to identify alternative uses for those deemed surplus.

2.3 A report on findings and recommendations was approved by Transport and Environment Committee at its meeting of 14 January 2014. This report details progress on those recommendations.

### Main report

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3.1 Over recent years, bowling numbers have decreased by almost two-thirds:

<b>Site</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2014</b>	
Balgreen	6816	1448	
Leith Links	2954	738	
Powderhall	1566	1034	
St Margaret's Park	2161	1648	
Victoria Park	1881	1021	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,378</b>	<b>5,889</b>	<b>- 9,489</b>

3.2 The consultation identified that current levels of demand could still be met with reduced provision. The report presented to Committee, on 14 January 2014, identified possible alternative uses for redundant greens, such as food growing areas or additional recreational facilities. The following is an update on progress in realising these alternative uses:

### **Balgreen**

3.3 Recommendation: “To retain two of the four bowling greens and the remaining two greens to be re-developed for either food growing, tennis courts or to explore the option of Balgreen Primary School using the space to extend the school grounds”.

3.4 Four options are currently being considered:

- Transfer of bowling greens to Children & Families for use as part of the rising rolls project. This would provide alternative playground space to that lost through future expansion of Balgreen Primary School.
- Leasing of the site to the Edinburgh Croquet Club to accommodate rising membership and increasing participation in national competitions. Discussions are ongoing as to whether the club could be accommodated alongside the existing bowlers and community groups currently using the pavilion.
- Leasing the site to Tynecastle Boys Club for use for soccer fours.
- Use of the site for food growing to in order to make further headway in meeting allotment strategy targets.

### **Leith Links**

3.5 Recommendation: “Implement Leith Links Tennis and Petanque Project leaving three greens. Explore a subsequent proposal by the Scottish Beach Volleyball Association to convert one of the remaining greens into a beach volleyball court”.

3.6 The project to deliver new public tennis and petanque courts was completed in the Autumn of 2014 at a cost of £80,000, which included contributions from SportScotland, East of Scotland Tennis, and the Lawn Tennis Association. The courts were officially opened on 31 October 2014, and responsibility for bookings transferred to Edinburgh Leisure.

3.7 The Scottish Beach Volleyball Association has been unable to secure funding for courts at Leith Links. Alternative uses are now being explored. Two greens continue to be maintained for the playing of bowls.

### **Powderhall**

3.8 Recommendation: “To retain one green and re-develop the remaining two for either play area/ball court or food growing”.

- 3.9 Discussions with Broughton Primary School identified a desire to use two greens as green space for pupils. These greens were first used for the school sports day in June 2014, previous sports days having been held in another part of the city. Pupils from Nursery through to Primary 7 took part, with parents invited to attend to see the new facility for themselves. Feedback from pupils, families and staff was positive and so the school now uses the site for PE activities, including rugby, hockey and Gaelic football.

### **St Margaret's Park**

- 3.10 Recommendation: "To retain the single green and to investigate the potential for creating a Petanque rink".
- 3.11 Due to budgetary constraints, it has not yet been possible to realise this recommendation. The cost would be approximately £15,000.

### **Victoria Park**

- 3.12 Recommendation: "To retain two of the three greens and investigate the opportunities to integrate the bowling green directly in front of the clubhouse back into the park area".
- 3.13 Following further consultation with the local community it was agreed to retain the two greens closest to the clubhouse for bowling, and convert the third green into a food growing area. In May 2015, sixteen new "mini" allotments were constructed, along with a community garden and an area for Trinity Academy to use for educational purposes.

## **Measures of success**

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- 4.1 Alternative uses agreed and initiated across those bowling greens deemed surplus to need.

## **Financial impact**

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- 5.1 Parks & Greenspace has realised an annual grounds maintenance saving of £40,000 as part of its 2013/14 savings plan.

## **Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 There are no impacts for risk, policy, compliance or governance identified.

## **Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 Agreeing alternative uses for unused bowling greens has widened the range of opportunities available for the local community, including those who fall within the protected characteristic groups.

## Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 There is no negative sustainability impact with regard to these proposals. The option of providing additional allotments will help meet the current demand for food growing.

## Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 Community consultation is planned or has already taken place at each location.

## Background reading/external references

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- 1 Report to Transport and Environment Committee, 14 January 2014.  
[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/41886/item\\_no\\_717\\_-\\_public\\_bowling\\_green](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/41886/item_no_717_-_public_bowling_green)

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## Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	P33 - Strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve local people in decisions on how Council resources are used P42 - Continue to support and invest in our sporting infrastructure
<b>Council outcomes</b>	CO10 - Improved health and reduced inequalities CO19 - Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm. CO23 - Well engaged and well informed – Communities and

individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community.

**Single Outcome Agreement**

SO2 - Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and well being, with reduced inequalities in health.

SO4 - Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.

**Appendices**

N/A