

Calculating the value of Edinburgh's Parks

Social Return on Investment Analysis 2014

Technical report



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1. Introduction to the SROI report

In 2014 City of Edinburgh Council undertook a project intended to calculate an estimate of the value of services delivered in Edinburgh Council-run parks. The study provided a forecast of the social return from the investment by the Council in 4 sample Edinburgh Parks, and also the Pentland Hills Regional Park. The benefits that are measured are those that are made possible by the investment the authority makes in maintaining and managing the park and have been identified following consultation with those who were most directly affected. The analysis of the 4 sample parks was undertaken during 2014 by Carrick Associates. The analysis of Pentland Hills Regional Park was undertaken by Greenspace Scotland in 2012. The results of the 5 studies were then combined with population data obtained from 5000 face-to-face interviews to give an estimate of the value of services delivered in all 142 of Edinburgh's parks.

This document is the **Technical Report** which provides details of how the **4 sample park studies** were undertaken, and the results that were found. It is 90 pages long. There is also a shorter separate **summary report** available, which gives an overview of the process and the findings, and gives the scaled-up figures for the city park system. It should be read alongside this one. This document draws together the 4 individual parks SROI studies which together were used as a basis for scaling up an estimate of the value of all of Edinburgh's parks. Each park study was conducted as a separate exercise, so please note that there is an element of repetition in the descriptions of the processes that were applied in each case. The Pentland Hills Study was created as a stand-alone report and can be downloaded separately.

The overall finding was that for every £1 invested in Edinburgh's parks, approximately £12 of benefits are delivered. The cost benefit ratio varies from 1:7 for a natural park, to 1:17 for a large city-centre park.

In outline the project work was as follows.

1. 4 sample parks were selected, which it was felt between them covered the breadth of services which were delivered across all parks in Edinburgh, and where the majority of stakeholder benefits could be measured. These were subject to individual SROI analysis. (Previous SROI work done on the Pentland Hills Regional Park in 2012 was also included in the study as a part of the overall estimate of value).
2. Questions were inserted in the annual Edinburgh People's Survey (EPS) which were intended to provide reliable estimates of all Edinburgh parks user activity. The EPS data is gathered from 5000 face-to-face interviews with a stratified sample group. Further information on the EPS is available here:
http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20029/have_your_say/921/edinburgh_people_survey
3. The data from the 4 sample parks plus the Pentland Hills Regional Park were scaled up, using data about visiting habits obtained from the EPS. This gave estimates for the value of the whole Edinburgh parks system. See the Summary Report for this aspect.

The main limitation in the final figure is that the EPS data only includes Edinburgh residents aged 16 years or over, which means that the user figures yields in the EPS study **do not include visitors or children & young people**. Unfortunately available resources mean that further survey work could not be commissioned, and the study had to work within the constraints of the EPS.

A recent report¹ “provides clear evidence that public parks are at a point of transition and are now facing many significant challenges. As public spending has fallen parks have faced significant cuts in their funding and staffing.

It is hoped that this report will make a valuable contribution towards the case for continued investment.

1.1 The Principles of SROI

Social Return on Investment (SROI) provides a principled approach that can be used to measure and account for a broad concept of value. It measures social, environmental and economic change from the perspective of those who experience or contribute to it. It can be used to identify and apply a monetary value to represent each change that is measured. The resultant financial value is then adjusted to take account of contributions from others. In this way the overall impact of an activity can be calculated and the value generated compared to the investment in the activities. This enables a ratio of cost to benefits to be calculated. For example, a ratio of 1:3 indicates that an investment of £1 in the activities has delivered £3 of social value.²

Whilst an SROI analysis will provide a headline costs to benefits ratio, it will also deliver a detailed narrative that explains how change is created and evaluates the impact of the change through the evidence that is gathered. An SROI analysis is based on clear principles and progresses through set stages. SROI is much more than just a number. It is a story about change, on which to base decisions, and that story is told through case studies, qualitative, quantitative and financial information.

There are two types of SROI analyses: a forecast SROI predicts the impact of a project or activity and an evaluative SROI measures the changes that it has delivered. This report is a forecast SROI analysis which can be used as a template for establishing a future framework that uses an outcome based approach to monitoring and evaluation.

Principle	Description
Involve stakeholders	Inform what gets measured and how this is measured and valued by involving stakeholders
Understand what changes	Articulate how change is created and evaluate this through evidence gathered, recognising positive and negative changes as well as those that are intended or unintended
Value the things that matter	Use financial proxies in order that the value of the outcomes can be recognised. Many outcomes are not traded in markets and as a result their value is not recognised
Only include what is material	Determine what information and evidence must be included in the accounts to give a true and fair picture, such that stakeholders can draw reasonable conclusions about impact
Do not over-claim	Only claim the value that organisations are responsible for creating
Be transparent	Demonstrate the basis on which the analysis may be considered accurate and honest, and show that it will be reported to and discussed with stakeholders
Verify the result	Ensure independent appropriate assurance

¹ <http://www.hlf.org.uk/state-uk-public-parks>

² In SROI, ‘social’ is taken as a shorthand for social, economic and environmental value

The SROI Network has published a comprehensive guide to SROI. This can be downloaded at www.sroinetwork.org.uk

1.2 Theory of change from the perspective of stakeholders

*'Green environments are healthy environments'*³ There is overwhelming research evidence of the link between greenspace and better health in the widest sense. Salutogenesis is a term coined by Professor Aaron Antonovsky and describes an approach focused on the relationship between health, stress and coping. Greenspaces are 'salutogenic', as they help reduce stress and promote behaviour that is associated with health and wellbeing. *"Whilst the particular reasons for this are not fully understood... what we do know is that experiencing these natural environments – or helping to care for them – can improve the mental health and well-being of individuals and help to recharge their physical, mental and social capacities"*.

As well as delivering health benefits for all access to greenspace can assist in the reduction of health inequalities. *"Research demonstrates that disadvantaged people who live in areas with large amounts of green space may be more likely to use their local green spaces and be more physically active, thus experiencing better health outcomes than those of a similar level of disadvantage for whom such easy access to good quality green space is much less. There is some research showing that interventions using the natural environment to improve health can deliver costs savings for health and related services and improve physical and mental health outcomes. So, increasing the amount and quality of green space can be part of a low cost package to address health inequalities, improve health outcomes and deliver other benefits."*

Parks and greenspaces also make a contribution to creating healthy communities and encouraging social cohesion.⁴

The many benefits of greenspace activities are well documented and *'provide a very cost effective means of promoting health and wellbeing, as well as a mechanism for increasing community and citizen involvement in volunteering'*⁵.

All greenspaces, large and small, urban and rural deliver tangible benefits to people.

"We live in a flat and this park is important as it is our outdoor space. We walk through the park on the way to school. The kids are chatting away and we can see all the wildlife. There is always something to look at and talk about"

1.3 Policy Context

City of Edinburgh Council's parks contribute to the Scottish Government's five key objectives.⁶

- Wealthier and fairer
- Smarter
- Safer and stronger
- Greener
- Healthier

³ [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/FCPG019.pdf/\\$FILE/FCPG019.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/FCPG019.pdf/$FILE/FCPG019.pdf)

⁴ Natural England (2014). Microeconomic Evidence for the Benefits of Investment in the Environment 2 (MEBIE2). p64

⁵ Green Space [value of green space report](#)

⁶ [Strategic Objectives - Scottish Government](#)

It is recognised that taking part in outdoor recreation improves health and wellbeing and provides opportunities for people to improve their understanding of the natural environment through direct contact. Recent research suggests that regular physical activity in a natural environment can reduce the risk of experiencing poor mental health by as much as 50%.⁷ As a result of these proven benefits the Government wishes to increase the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week.⁸ This will require individuals to have a better understanding of the value provided by outdoor recreational activities and an increased awareness of the availability of green spaces. In 2012, for the first time in recent years, there was a reduction in the numbers of outdoor visits. In 2012 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week compared with 48 % in 2010, 46% in 2009, and 44% in 2006.⁹

Day trips and tourist visits have a vital role to play in sustaining local economies. The Scottish Recreation Survey¹⁰ found that the average expenditure on an outdoor visit was £7. Parks and greenspaces have an inherent intrinsic value and a study suggested that the asset value of parks and greenspaces should be considered in more detail and their significance to local communities and businesses assessed¹¹. By applying the methodology used in this approach the value of a major public park has been calculated to be £108 million.

The Scottish Government strategy 'Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth'¹² identifies measures to improve the skills and employability of individuals. It recognises the crucial role that community based projects can play in helping achieve these objectives. Parks provide opportunities for community based projects and volunteers to take part in a range of conservation and environmental activities that allow them to gain new practical and social skills.

The Curriculum for Excellence provides a single curriculum in all Scottish schools for children and young people from 3 -18. It aims to 'allow for greater opportunity and choice to help young people realise their individual talents'.¹³ Its purpose is to ensure that young people become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Parks and greenspaces maintain links with schools and provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the environment and nature in an outdoor classroom setting.

Research clearly demonstrates that communities in which individuals have a sense of connection and belonging are safer. Individuals are much less likely to commit criminal acts against people or property if they have a common purpose and shared identity.

'Participation in nature activities has been shown to increase a sense of community strength and pride'¹⁴

⁷[Regular physical activity in natural environments halves risk of poor mental health | Centre for research on environment, society and health](#)

⁸[Increase the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week](#)

⁹<http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1020956.pdf>

¹⁰[Scottish Recreation Survey](#)

¹¹[CABE making the invisible visible](#)

¹²<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/04125111/0>

¹³[Curriculum for Excellence](#)

¹⁴http://www.groundwork.org.uk/pdf/Green_spaces_worth.pdf

2 Social Return on Investment Analysis Figgate Park

“One of our greatest discoveries was this park – a lovely place to live and walk in” – a park user

2.1. Introduction and summary of findings

This report describes and quantifies the potential social return from investing in Figgate Park.

The work carried out for this report was commissioned by City of Edinburgh Council and undertaken from February to October 2014 by Carrick Associates supported by staff from Parks and Greenspace, Services for Communities, City of Edinburgh Council.

The period that is considered in the analysis is one year.

The analysis identified those most affected by the service and records and values some of the changes they experience. These include:

- Individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity and will feel better and be more relaxed after being outside in the park. They will gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have a better understanding of their local environment. By visiting the park individuals will have an increased connection to their local community, meet new people and increase their number of social contacts
- Volunteers will gain a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community by contributing to a good cause. By taking part in meetings and events they will make new friends and increase their social contacts significantly.
- Local employers will gain economic benefits from having employees who, as a result of visiting the park during their lunch break, will feel better, be more relaxed and less stressed and hence will be able to perform better on returning to work.
- Schools, nurseries other learning providers will be able to provide opportunities for physical activity and learning in a local greenspace.
- Pupils, students and young children will be able to gain new practical skills, learn about wildlife and nature and to participate in unique learning experiences.
- Local residents living in proximity to the park will have an improved quality of life and better visual amenity.
- Local businesses and the local economy will gain additional revenue as a result of visitors to the park

It was found that every £1 invested would generate around £9 of benefits. By applying a sensitivity analysis, or varying any assumptions made in the calculation, the value of the benefits derived ranges from £7 to £11.

2.1.1 Background - Figgate Park

The City of Edinburgh Council has classified its parks into four main categories¹⁵. This park is a Community Park which is defined as ‘serving local needs’. It has a Green Flag.

Figgate Park is a popular established community park in Edinburgh’s East Neighbourhood, originally acquired by the City of Edinburgh Council in 1933 and covering 11.26 hectares. Providing an attractive green space in a residential and industrial area it has many attractive features. The area on which the park is located was originally known as Figgate Muir, an expanse of moorland through which the Figgate Burn flowed from Duddingston Loch to the sea.

“With its distinctive burn running through the park, pond and animated wildlife, the Figgate Park provides an attractive green space in the heart of Edinburgh's East Neighbourhood. Its many entrances are commonly used by local walkers, joggers and cyclists as a convenient access to areas between Duddingston and Portobello. The pond, with a boardwalk and wide variety of waterfowl is the main attraction, but a children's play area, teen area and even a pictorial wildflower meadow, ensure there is lots to see and do in the park. The park has been awarded a Green Flag since 2010, in recognition of it being a quality greenspace.”¹⁶

2.2. Scope and stakeholders

2.2.1 Scope

This is a forecast of the social return from the investment of the City of Edinburgh Council in Figgate Park. The predictions are based on a one year period from 2013 to 2014.

2.2.2 Activity

The park offers users a diverse natural environment which is managed and maintained by dedicated staff. Additional information can be found in the park’s Management Plan.¹⁷. This includes the provision of:

- a range of habitats for native flora and fauna
- an historic environment with archaeological sites and monuments
- a paths network with access points and signage
- children’s and teenage play areas
- picnic area

This enables the following activities to take place:

- recreational pursuits e.g. cycling, walking, jogging etc.
- environmental education
- community and public events
- safe spaces for meeting up
- community gatherings

¹⁵ More detail on the basis for this approach can be found in the Public Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006 and Open Space Strategy 2010.

¹⁶ http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory_record/164082/figgate_park

¹⁷ http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/900/figgate_park_management_plan

2.2.3 Stakeholder identification and consultation

All those who were likely to experience change as a result of the project (the stakeholders), were identified, the nature of any changes that might be experienced considered and how such changes might be measured explored. At the end of the discussions a list of those organisations or individuals whom it was believed would be significantly affected was drawn up (the 'included' stakeholders). Details about the rationale for including these stakeholders are provided in section 2.8.1.

A list of those whom it was thought would not experience significant change, and hence it was not considered appropriate to contact for further discussion, was also identified (the 'excluded' stakeholders). More details on this group and the reason for their exclusion can be found in section 2.8.1.

A consultation plan was established for each of the identified stakeholders using methodologies that best suited their individual needs. Consultation was carried out by Carrick Associates and facilitated by staff at City of Edinburgh Council's Parks and Greenspace Services. Section 2.8.2 sets out the engagement methods used for each stakeholder.

Stakeholders were consulted initially to confirm possible outcomes that had been identified as a result of discussion with staff from City of Edinburgh Council, volunteers and locally based organisations and individuals.

Stakeholders were consulted, in a variety of ways, at all stages of the process.

2.3. Change from the stakeholder perspective

2.3.1 Individual visitors

By visiting the park visitors are able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a safe and accessible natural environment. Individuals of all ages can take part in a wide range of activities which range from taking the dog for a walk, to jogging or taking the kids to the playpark.

"It's good to have the play park for the kids – the park is a good length for a walk"

"I visit three or four times per day. It's good walk along water - it is our exercise and the dogs"

"It's a way to walk the dog in greenspace on my doorstep"

"It definitely improves all people's lives get them out in sunshine and lets the kids play"

Visitor comments

Figgate has a rich and varied natural environment and offers the opportunity to be outdoors and enjoy the views and to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park.

"It's an open space close by, which is great for the kids who net the pond life. It gets us all out. I lived in the house that back onto parks when young and loved it; I want my children to enjoy the park"

"At night when I am walking the dog I can see foxes. I love seeing wildlife in the city."

"It's an integral part of my life- I grew up in this area and used to play here after school. You can see how the seasons change. I love the wildlife and watched the cormorants nesting; I saw the chicks hatch and watched them fly away. it's part of my culture and it used to be a clay pit- its living history."

For many visitors, the park is part of their local community and offers the chance to meet new and existing friends. Some friendships have endured over the generations.

"I have been in Edinburgh for 30 years. I brought my kids to this park and I still see some of the people I played with when I grew up here. It is just a part of my life."

"It's relaxing and good for wellbeing – so nice to enjoy the outdoor with no stress and to meet other mothers"

"When I was ill and away for a few weeks the other dog walkers were worried and came to see me"

Visitor comments

2.3.2 Providers of community based projects

Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment and in this way to provide better quality services to their members or users.

"The walkers really enjoy coming here – in all weathers. It is just makes us feel good being outdoors even if it is raining"

Local walking group

2.3.3 Volunteers

Volunteers have more social contacts and are more confident in dealing with challenging situations.

"I have a much wider circle of acquaintances"

"I have got to know a wide range of people"

"They are a very sociable group and good company "

Volunteer

By providing a service to the community volunteers have improved self-esteem and gain a sense of worth and purpose as they feel valued by the community.

"It's great to be part of the park and to see it blossom"

"I enjoy the clean-ups and it gives me a great deal of satisfaction to see the park looking so good park"

"I feel more involved in the local community which is a very positive feeling"

Volunteer

2.3.4 Schools

By visiting the park and taking part in activities schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities. The real life, hands on experience which this offers to pupils who are supported to engage directly with their environment offers a unique learning experience and makes a valuable contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence.

"The park is so close to the school it's like having an outdoor classroom on our doorstep. Children get so many benefits from the outdoor experience."

Primary Teacher

2.3.5. Local employers and employees

By visiting Figgate Park during their lunch breaks individuals feel better and are more relaxed and less stressed. As a result their performance improves on returning to work. Those individuals who walked with their work colleagues reported being better able to work as a team.

"We work at our desks and it's great to get a bit of exercise at lunchtime. We walk and chat - it helps us work better."

Local employee

2.3.6 School pupils, students and children

Figgate offers students and school pupils the opportunity to gain new practical skills and to learn about wildlife and nature.

"I like being outside listening to all the animals in the park."

"There are otters in the pond but they are hard to see."

"At night there are lots of different animals. I have seen foxes from my house."

Children

2.3.7 Surrounding house holders

Living close to Figgate Park improves individuals the quality of life for individuals and families by offering easy access to a local greenspace and natural views.

"We do not have a garden - this is our chance to get out in fresh air close by and let children play."

"We live in a flat and this park is important as it is our outdoor space. We walk through park to school."

"It's a pleasant relaxing place - the reason we moved here was to live close to the park."

"It's very important for relaxing children and everyone's psychological wellbeing. "

"This is our garden."

Local residents

2.3.8 Local businesses and the local economy

It should be pointed out that this aspect of the analysis was limited in scope and focussed on trying to identify the potential economic value of the park by asking visitors how much they had or would spend in the local area as a result of their visit. It didn't take account of any other beneficial economic effects.

"We bought our lunch in the local shop and now we are going to eat it by the pond."

Visitors comment

2.4. Inputs and outputs

2.4.1 Investment (inputs)

The money invested by the stakeholders below was used to pay employee costs, property costs, transport costs, supplies and services and support services.

Stakeholder	Description	Amount
Volunteers	Volunteers providing 620 hours of assistance	£6,200
City of Edinburgh Council	Estimated revenue spend and average annual capital spend	£77,080
Total inputs for April 13 to March 14		£83,280

2.4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place as a result of the inputs. These activities or outputs will lead to change (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Relevant outputs
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are an estimated 138,000 visits to the park each year
Local Groups and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local groups and organisations are able to provide 30 sessions using the park as a natural environment to provide services to their members/clients
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 volunteers support the park through taking part in a variety of activities and events and provide dedicated support on at least 6 occasions.
Schools, nurseries and youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and nurseries are able to provide opportunities for outdoor learning attended by 500 children and young people who gain new skills and learn more about the environment and nature
Local economy and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 138 000 visitors to the park spend varying amounts in the local economy
Local employers and employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 employees from local businesses visit the park in their lunch hour or walk through it on their way to work at least once a week
Householders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 300 householders who live in proximity to the park and enjoy the amenity and access

2.4.3 Quantities

It is important to clarify the number in each stakeholder group who will actually experience the outcome that has been identified. In many cases not all of the stakeholders involved will experience change, or indeed may do so to varying degrees. This is a forecast analysis and for some of the outcomes predicted cost savings have been applied and hence quantities are not relevant.

Stakeholder	Numbers	Achieved outcomes	Rationale
Community : occasional users	93,840	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	68% of those surveyed / pro rata
	100740	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	73% of those surveyed / pro rata
	46920	No of individuals who report increased awareness and understanding of the local environment	34% of those surveyed / pro rata
	22080	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	24% of those surveyed / pro rata
	57960	No of individuals who take part in an increased number of community activities	42% of those surveyed / pro rata
Volunteers	40	No. of volunteers who report better self esteem and feeling valued	40
	12	No. of new friendships and social contacts	12
Local employers and employees	200	No of individuals who report feeling more relaxed and better able to perform after spending time in park	100% of those surveyed
	75	No of individuals who report that they are better able to work in a team with their colleagues	64 % of those surveyed
Schools and Nurseries	500	No of children attending trips/visit to park	Estimated visits per pupil/ child
School pupils, students and children	100	No of pupils and students reporting the acquisition of new skills	20% of those surveyed
	500	No of pupils taking part in environmental activities in the park	100% of those surveyed
Surrounding House holders	300	No of residents who have view of park/ No of residents who find it easier to derive benefits from proximity of park	Estimate of property in immediate area
Local Community Groups	30	No. of sessions delivered in park/ No of participants who report access to park as positive enhancement to service	100% of those surveyed
local economy/businesses	138000	Reported amount spent by visitors to Figgate Park	visitors spend an average of £4.32 each

2.5. Outcomes and valuation

2.5.1 Outcomes evidence

The changes (or outcomes) which were identified, following consultation with each stakeholder, are detailed below along with information on how the outcome was measured (indicators). All of the outcomes reported were positive. The outcomes which had to be excluded and the reason for this are listed in section 2.8.3.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	No of individuals who report increased awareness and understanding of the local environment	Consultation
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	Consultation
	By visiting Figgate Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	No of individuals who take part in an increased number of community activities	Consultation
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	No. of volunteers who report better self esteem and feeling valued	Consultation

	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	No. of new friendships and social contacts	Consultation /database
Local employers and employees	By visiting Figgate Park during lunch breaks individuals will be able to feel better and more relaxed and perform better on returning to work	No of individuals who report feeling more relaxed and better able to perform after spending time in park	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting the park in a group during their lunch break individuals will be able to work better as a team and improve their performance at work	No of individuals who report that they are better able to work in a team with their colleagues	Consultation
Schools and Nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	No of children attending trips/visit to park	Consultation
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Figgate Park students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	No of pupils and students reporting the acquisition of new skills	Consultation
	By visiting Figgate Park school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	No of pupils taking part in environmental activities in the park	Consultation
Surrounding House holders	Living close to Figgate Park improves the quality of life	No of residents who have view of park/ No of residents who find it easier to derive benefits from proximity of park	Research / Consultation
Local Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a safe well maintained outdoor space to provide services to their members/ clients	No. of sessions delivered in park/ No of participants who report access to park as positive enhancement to service	Consultation
local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Reported amount spent by visitors to Figgate Park	Consultation

2.5.2 Valuation

Financial proxies have been identified which allow a monetary value to be placed on the changes experienced by individual stakeholders. In each case stakeholders have been consulted on the appropriateness of these measures and given the opportunity to make suggestions on potential financial proxies. These were taken into account in the final selection. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy attempts have been made to link the financial amount to the level of importance placed on the change by individual stakeholders.

Further information on how each outcome is valued is provided in section 2.6.4.

2.6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis

2.6.1 Duration and drop off

Before the calculation can be finalised a decision has to be made as to how long the changes produced will last. In an SROI analysis the length of time changes endure is considered so that their future value can be assessed. The question to be answered is *'if the activity stopped tomorrow, how much of the value would still be there?'*

To predict the length of time changes will continue stakeholder opinion and independent research are both taken into account. There will be variations in the length of time benefits last according to the nature of the change and also the characteristics of individual stakeholders. Where significant assumptions have been required about the likely duration of change these have been considered in the sensitivity analysis in Section 2.6.4.

Many of the benefits gained by stakeholders have been the acquisition of new skills and it is expected that these will last three years. This is line with several certified practical skills assessments (e.g. first aid) in which competency levels are expected to last for a defined period. Other benefits have been considered to endure for a year as there is little supporting evidence that they will last longer.

Improvements to physical structures have been assumed to last for a period of 10 years.

Outcomes which will continue to have a value in future years cannot be expected to maintain the same level of value for each of these years. This has been dealt with by assuming that the value will reduce or 'drop off' each year. This varies considerably depending on the particular outcome and is discussed in more detail in 2.8.6

Section 2.8.6 sets out the duration and drop off assumptions.

2.6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming

As well as considering how long the changes a service or activity delivers will last, it is necessary to take account of other factors that may be influential. The recorded change might have happened regardless of the service, something else may have made a contribution to it or the service may have displaced changes taking place elsewhere. In considering the extent to which each of these factors have played a part in the total impact a realistic approach should be adopted. The aim is to be pragmatic about the benefits actually provided by the park and to recognise that the value it creates is affected by other events. The SROI methodology does this by taking all these factors into account in calculating the actual impact a project or activity delivers.

2.6.2.1 Deadweight

A reduction for deadweight reflects the fact that a proportion of an outcome might have happened without any intervention. For example volunteers might have gained some of the benefits they experienced by taking part in alternative volunteering opportunities that included environmental activities. The detailed assumptions about deadweight are contained in 2.8.5.

2.6.2.2 Attribution

Attribution takes account of external factors, including the contribution of others that may have played a part in the changes that are identified. For instance, it is likely that many visitors to the park will take part in outdoor physical activities in other areas, indeed usage of other parks was identified and recorded in the consultation that was undertaken, and this will contribute to the changes they experience. The detailed assumptions about attribution are contained in 2.8.5.

2.6.2.3 Displacement

Displacement applies when one outcome is achieved but at the expense of another outcome, or another stakeholder is adversely affected. In the analysis this is considered to occur for a few stakeholders to a limited extent. By way of illustration, volunteers might have taken part in other voluntary activities or have been able to allocate more time to any existing volunteering commitments. The detailed assumptions about displacement are contained in 2.8.5.

2.6.3 Calculation of social return

Appendix 1.7 details the values for each outcome that a stakeholder experiences and takes into account deductions to avoid over-claiming. These individual values have been added together then compared with the investment in the park provided at section 2.4.1 above.

The results show a social return on investment of around £7 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

2.6.4 Sensitivity analysis

In calculating the social return on investment it has been necessary to make certain assumptions which may include the use of data which is either not subject to universal agreement or which cannot be adequately evidenced. To assess how much influence this has had on the final value that has been calculated a sensitivity analysis is carried out and the results recorded. By doing this the value of the benefits can be expressed within defined limits.

The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

Factor	Assumption	Variation	Result
Increase attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 90%	Between 10% and 90%	£7.99
Decrease Attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 90% 80%	Between 0% and 80%	£10.89
Reduce high value financial proxies by 25%	£5,070.00 and £200	£3,802.50 and £150	£8.75

Increase quantities of community users by 50%	138,000	207,000	£10.73
Reduce quantities of community users by 50%	138,000	69,000	£7.24

It can be seen that varying visitor numbers has the most significant impact on the investment ratio. As has already been highlighted the findings are in line with more robust research but this remains the area about which there is least certainty. The evidence used, although collected directly from stakeholders, is based on a fairly small sample size.

The other factors tested in the sensitivity analysis have limited impact and there can be a degree of confidence that the assumptions made in calculating impact would not significantly affect the final result.

2.6.5 Materiality Considerations

At every stage of the SROI process judgements have to be made about how to interpret and convey information. Sometimes the rationale behind the decision is obvious and fully evidenced, on other occasions additional explanation or information may be required. SROI demands total clarity and complete transparency about the approach that is taken so that there is no possibility of confusion or misinterpretation. Applying a concept of materiality means that explanations must be offered for information that can be interpreted in different ways and which can exert influence on the decisions others might take.

The concept can be of particular importance in ensuring that outcomes for stakeholders are relevant, are not perceived as being duplicated and that the different values individual stakeholders may ascribe to the changes they experience are understood.

In assessing issues that are material SROI requires that various factors are taken into account. Stakeholder view is of paramount importance and from the outset, and throughout the preparation of this analysis stakeholders were invited to comment on the interpretation of data and the inclusion of information. Engagement took various forms including e mail requests for comment, telephone interviews and one to one meetings.

Contribution to local businesses/economy

There is a degree of uncertainty over the figures used for local spending however the figures used err on the side of caution and are tested in the sensitivity analysis. The contribution to the local economy made by parks go beyond enabling visitor spending. Additional revenues generated by events and the contribution to the local economy of greenspace amenity to businesses have not been considered.

Householder Amenity

The number of properties who would benefit from access and amenity to the park was calculated by looking at google maps to identify the number of homes in the defined area. The financial proxy chosen to represent these benefits relates to property values. Whilst it is accepted that a small percentage of those householders would rent as opposed to own their property it was felt that this was the best way of measuring the benefit.

Local Employers and employees

These were unexpected outcomes that were identified in the course of stakeholder consultation. It became clear that the park was being used by workers in their lunch break and as a route to work. Upon more detailed questioning it was possible to ascertain and value the benefits this provided which went beyond improved physical activity and wellbeing for individuals. As the benefits related to greater productivity and improved working relationships these positive outcomes were held to advantage employers.

Volunteer outcomes

All the volunteers surveyed stated that they experienced ‘a sense of worth as they felt valued by the community’. This was regarded as very important and the subject of several additional comments from individuals. In discussion about how best to value this change it was felt that the most appropriate financial proxy was the cost of the average annual charitable donation. The benefits delivered by the new friendships created by the volunteering opportunities were valued at the price of a weekend away using a process of contingent valuation.

Avoiding double counting

The health and wellbeing benefits for employees who use the park at lunchtime have been included in the visitor stakeholder group and have not been valued separately.

2.7. Conclusion

This report identifies and values the many benefits delivered by the investment City of Edinburgh Council makes by maintaining Figgate Park.

The social return from investing in the Figgate Park is predicted to be in the region of £9 for every £1 invested.

It is important to stress that this has been done from the perspective of those who will be able to experience the changes.

2.8. Audit trail and impact map information

2.8.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

A small group of individuals which included representatives from City of Edinburgh Council, the Friends Group and other voluntary organisations met to identify and consider potential stakeholders and outcomes.

The Friends Group and other voluntary organisations met to identify and consider potential stakeholders and outcomes.

Stakeholder	Included/ excluded	Rationale
Visitors/Individuals	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Volunteers	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
City of Edinburgh Council	Included	Funder and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Friends of Group	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Householders	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Corporate Volunteers	Excluded	Occasional use made of park and hence not likely to experience significant outcomes
Organisations/ Portebello Community Council,/ Environment Forum ,Portebello Amenity Society	Excluded	Enabling organisations unlikely to experience any outcomes
Schools (Duddingston and St John's PS, Leith High School)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Community based organisations (Walking groups/ uniform groups/ Northfield Neighbourhood Association))	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.

2.8.2 Engagement methods for ‘included’ stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method of Engagement	Date	Number
Visitors/Individuals	Individual Questionnaire/ Survey Monkey	May – Aug 14	
Volunteers	Individual Questionnaires	May – Aug 14	40
City of Edinburgh Council	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	5
Friends of Group	Individual Interviews/ Questionnaire	May – Aug 14	8
Schools (Duddingston and St John’s PS, Leith High School)	Quiz/ Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	32
Householders	Focus Groups	May – Aug 14	8
Community based organisations (Walking groups/ uniform groups/ Northfield Neighbourhood Association)	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	5

2.8.3 Outcomes identified but not measured

During the study, some outcomes were identified which were not included in the final impact map:

Stakeholder	Outcome	Indicator and proposed method of measurement	Rational for exclusion
Individual visitors	Opportunity to spend quality time with family	No of individuals reporting improved family relationships. Specific question included in individual surveys	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation.
Local economy	Financial contribution from events	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis
	Financial contribution from job creation	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis

2.8.4 Financial proxies

All of the outcomes that were included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	Cost of a trip to a gym	£5.50	http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/venues/royal-commonwealth-pool/prices
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	Stakeholder valuation	£2.50	Stakeholder valuation
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	Cost of an outdoor educational experience	£4.00	http://www.nts.org.uk/Events/Whats-on/Active-outdoors/
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	Average spend on socialising	£2.50	Components of household expenditure, 2012
	By visiting Figgate Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	Average spend on community activities	£2.10	Components of household expenditure, 2012
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	average value of a donation to charity	£140.40	Components of Household Expenditure 2012 £2.70 per week

	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	Stakeholder valuation	£200.00	Stakeholder Surveys
Local employers and employees	By visiting Figgate Park during lunch breaks individuals will be able to feel better and more relaxed and perform better on returning to work	12% of average of days lost to sickness	£52.54	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2012 Provisional Results - ONS
	By visiting the park in a group during their lunch break individuals will be able to work better as a team and improve their performance at work	cost of a team activity	£15.00	http://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/events/corporate-events/
Schools and Nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	cost of an outdoor educational experience £4.50 per pupil	£4.50	http://www.rbge.org.uk/education/schools
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Figgate Park students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	cost of John Muir gathering session to support environmental volunteers	£15.00	John Muir Award Gatherings
	By visiting Figgate Park school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	cost of an outdoor educational experience	£12	http://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/visiting/admission/
Surrounding House holders	Living close to Figgate Park improves the quality of life	increase in financial value of property	£5,070.00	3% increase in property prices
Local Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a safe well maintained outdoor space to provide services to their members/ clients	cost of room hire	£39.00	http://www.waterofleith.org.uk/hire/
local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Estimated contribution	£4.32	Projection of actual reported spend

2.8.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Stakeholder	Outcome	Deadweight %	Displacement %	Attribution %
Community : occasional users	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012.	0%	75% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012	0%	25% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	25% Limited similar opportunities	0%	75% Multiple sources of gaining information
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	80% Many other opportunities to gain this outcomes	0%	0% No similar opportunities
	By visiting Figgate Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	77% In the area many other community activities	0%	50% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources

Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	National research suggests that 31% of Scottish People volunteer in some capacity	10% Recognition of limited number who will no longer participate in other volunteering opportunities	5% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering opportunities
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	31% National research suggests that 31% of Scottish People volunteer in some capacity	0%	15% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering opportunities
Local employers and employees	By visiting Figgate Park during lunch breaks individuals will be able to feel better and more relaxed and perform better on returning to work	50% Availability of other activities	0%	50% Stakeholder feedback
	By visiting the park in a group during their lunch break individuals will be able to work better as a team and improve their performance at work	25% Availability of other activities	0%	25% Stakeholder feedback
Schools and Nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	25% Schools can take part in other supported outdoor environmental activities	0%	25% Schools can take part in other supported outdoor environmental activities
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Figgate Park students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available	0%	0%
	By visiting Figgate Park school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available	0%	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available

Surrounding House holders	Living close to Figgate Park improves the quality of life	90% Other contributions to Q of L	0%	90% Other contributions to Q of L
Local Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a safe well maintained outdoor space to provide services to their members/ clients	0%	0%	0%
Local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	40%	0%	0%

2.8.6 Duration and drop off assumptions

Stakeholder	Outcome	Duration	Drop off	Rationale
Community : occasional users	By visiting Figgate Park individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	3	25%	Acquisition of new skills will last for 3 years but diminish each year
Volunteers	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	3	0%	
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Figgate Park students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	3	25%	Acquisition of new skills will last for 3 years but diminish each year
	By visiting Figgate Park school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	3	25%	Acquisition of new skills will last for 3 years but diminish each year

2.8.7 Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Impact
Community : occasional users	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	93,840	£5.50	42%	0%	75%	£74,837.40
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	100740	£2.50	42%	0%	25%	£109,554.75
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	46920	£4.00	25%	0%	75%	£35,190.00
	By visiting Figgate Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	22080	£2.50	80%	0%	0%	£11,040.00
	By visiting Figgate Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	57960	£2.10	77%	0%	50%	£13,997.34
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	40	£140.40	31%	10%	5%	£3,313.16

	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	12	£200.00	31%	0%	15%	£1,407.60
Local employers and employees	By visiting Figgate Park during lunch breaks individuals will be able to feel better and more relaxed and perform better on returning to work	200	£52.54	50%	0%	50%	£2,627.00
	By visiting the park in a group during their lunch break individuals will be able to work better as a team and improve their performance at work	75	£15.00	25%	0%	25%	£632.81
Schools and Nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	500	£4.50	25%	0%	25%	£1,265.63
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Figgate Park students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	100	£15.00	25%	0%	0%	£1,125.00
	By visiting Figgate Park school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	500	£12	25%	0%	25%	£3,375.00
Surrounding House holders	Living close to Figgate Park improves the quality of life	300	£5,070.00	90%	0%	90%	£15,210.00
Local Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a safe well maintained outdoor space to provide services to their members/ clients	30	£39.00	0%	0%	0%	£1,170.00
Local economy/business	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	138000	£4.32	40%	0%	0%	£357,696.00

Totals

The SROI calculation is expressed as a ratio of return from investment. It is derived from dividing the monetised value of the sum of all the benefits by the total cost of the investment.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total Social Return
Impact Value	£632,441.69	£46,385.10	£38,943.23	£15,210.00	£15,210.00	£748,190.01

In this report the following figures were used to calculate the social return on investment.

- The total value is £748,190.01; the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value is £83,280.00

The SROI ratio is calculated by dividing the value by the investment.

The social return from investing in the Figgate Park is predicted to be in the region of £9 for every £1 invested.

3 Social Return on Investment Analysis

Gyle Park

“There’s lots of things going on, the park has so much to offer – it makes kids want to be active.” – a park user

3.1. Introduction & summary of findings

This report describes and quantifies the potential social return from investing in Gyle Park.

The work carried out for this report was commissioned by City of Edinburgh Council and undertaken from February to October 2014 by Carrick Associates supported by staff from Parks and Greenspace, Services for Communities, City of Edinburgh Council.

The period that is considered in the analysis is one year.

The analysis identified those who derive benefits from the park and values some of the changes they experience. These include:

- Individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity and will feel better and be more relaxed after being outside in the park. They will gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have a better understanding of their local environment. By visiting the park individuals will have an increased connection to their local community, meet new people and increase their number of social contacts
- Volunteers will gain a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community by contributing to a good cause. By taking part in meetings and events they will make new friends and increase their social contacts significantly. Volunteers will gain new practical and environmental skills.
- Schools, nurseries other learning providers will be able to provide opportunities for physical activity and learning in a local greenspace.
- Football players and cricketers will become physically fitter through taking part in organised sporting activities in the park.
- Local businesses and the local economy will gain additional revenue as a result of visitors to the park.

It was found that every £1 invested would generate around £9 of benefits. By applying a sensitivity analysis, or varying any assumptions made in the calculation, the value of the benefits derived ranges from £6 to £11.

3.1.1 Background – Gyle Park

The City of Edinburgh Council has classified its parks into four main categories¹⁸.

¹⁸ More detail on the basis for this approach can be found in the Public Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006 and Open Space Strategy 2010.

Gyle Park is a City Park which is defined as being dominated by sports or formal recreation serving citywide and local needs. One of the City's largest parks, it has been in council ownership since 1953. The Gyle Park is a popular sporting venue with cricket and football pitches available for hire. It also features an outdoor gym, skateboard and BMX park, a roller hockey area and children's play area.

3.2. Scope and stakeholders

3.2.1 Scope

This is a forecast of the social return from the investment of the City of Edinburgh Council in Gyle Park. The predictions are based on a one year period from 2013 to 2014.

3.2.2 Activity

The Park provides a series of features that encourage the reported outcomes. This includes the provision of

- An active group of volunteers who help to ensure that the Gyle Park is clean, safe and diverse, and to ensure that the park continues to be valued locally.
- Formal team sport facilities including pitches and changing facilities that encourage active participation in sport.
- An outdoor gym to encourage fitness.
- A skateboard and BMX area to encourage exercise and fitness.
- A large grass area to encourage walking and running.
- A children's play park to encourage active play and family interaction.

3.2.3 Stakeholder identification and consultation

All those who were likely to experience change as a result of the project (the stakeholders), were identified, the nature of any changes that might be experienced considered and how such changes might be measured explored. At the end of the discussions a list of those organisations or individuals whom it was believed would be significantly affected was drawn up (the 'included' stakeholders). Details about the rationale for including these stakeholders are provided in section 3.8.1.

A list of those whom it was thought would not experience significant change, and hence it was not considered appropriate to contact for further discussion, was also identified (the 'excluded' stakeholders). More details on this group and the reason for their exclusion can be found in section 3.8.1.

A consultation plan was established for each of the identified stakeholders using methodologies that best suited their individual needs. Consultation was carried out by Carrick Associates and facilitated by staff at City of Edinburgh Council's Parks and Greenspace Services. Section 3.8.2 sets out the engagement methods used for each stakeholder.

Stakeholders were consulted initially to confirm possible outcomes that had been identified as a result of discussion with staff from City of Edinburgh Council, volunteers and locally based organisations and individuals. Details can be found in section 3.8.2

Stakeholders were consulted, in a variety of ways, at all stages of the process.

3.3. Change from the stakeholder perspective

"It's an amazing place to take adults with learning difficulties - good to get fresh air - great to have some greenery in your life."

3.3.1 Individual visitors

By visiting the park individual visitors of all ages and abilities are able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a safe and accessible environment. Individuals can take part in a variety of physical activities which range from taking the dog for a walk to cycling and jogging.

"It gets me exercise and fresh air. Living in a flat I miss my garden and you can't live in your allotment."

"Kids get exercise - we come on his bike use the play park, run about and get fresh air and exercise."

"I exercise, get fresh air it helps get rid of the cobwebs. It's an invaluable part of my life to be able to get here."

"It allows us to burn off energy and frustration - brings in some fun and exercise- usually we cycle or bring our scooter with us."

Visitor comments

For many visitors, the park is part of their local community and offers the chance to meet new and existing friends. The large grassy spaces attract people who meet up to walk their dogs, pass through it on the commute to work or go to the local shops.

"We meet and speak to people here - Fantastic to have freedom to walk - breath fresh air get exercise and talk."

"The family living in that house cut the grass themselves so that the local kids could play football- there is a real sense of community here."

"It's a convenient walk from my home and I meet other walkers on the way."

"We meet and speak to people here - Fantastic to have freedom to walk - breathe fresh air get exercise and talk."

Visitor comments

3.3.2 Volunteers

By organising events and activities to maintain and encourage the use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to their community and contributing to a good cause. They also reported learning new skills and forming new friendships. By taking part in activities volunteers are more physically active on a regular basis.

"The park was originally in a poor state and it has been really rewarding to see it develop."

"Thanks to the paths improvements we supported, older people living in flats can access the park and go for a walk. The Care Home brings along some of their residents in wheelchairs! "

"When I moved here and got involved I made new friendships that have lasted for years."

Volunteer

3.3.3 Schools

By visiting the park and taking part in activities schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities. The real life, hands on experience which this offers to pupils who are supported to engage directly with their environment offers a unique learning experience and makes a valuable contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence.

"We bring pupils along to help with community clean ups and litter picks. The children really enjoy them and learn so much about how important it is to care for their local environment."

Primary Teacher

3.3.4 Local businesses and the local economy

It should be pointed out that this aspect of the analysis was limited in scope and focussed on trying to identify the potential economic value of the park by asking visitors how much they had or would spend in the local area as a result of their visit. It didn't take account of any other beneficial economic effects.

"We've been visiting family and thought we would go and buy some snacks and go for a cycle."

Visitor comments

3.3.5 Users of Football and Cricket pitches

Individuals taking part in organised activities on the sports pitches or by using the outdoor gym gain the health benefits of sustained physical activity.

"The park is a very valuable resource for local cricketers."

"I go for a walk and then use the gym- its fun its outside and it just gives that little bit extra exercise."

"We have a regular game –being part of a football team keeps me fit."

Users of sports facilities

3.4. Inputs and outputs

3.4.1 Investment (inputs)

The money invested by the stakeholders below was used to pay employee costs, property costs, transport costs, supplies and services and support services

Stakeholder	Description	Amount
Volunteers	24 volunteers time	£6020
City of Edinburgh Council	Estimated revenue spend and average capital spend	£24,700
Total inputs for April 13 to March 14		£30,720

3.4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place as a result of the inputs. These activities or outputs will lead to change (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Relevant outputs
Visitors/Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are an estimated 75,000 visits to the park each year
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 volunteers support the park through taking part in a variety of activities and events and provide dedicated support on at least 3 occasions.
Schools (Gylemuir PS and Craigmount HS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and nurseries are able to provide opportunities for outdoor learning attended by 850 children and young people who gain new skills and learn more about the environment and nature 40 voluntary rangers take part in an environment
Users of sporting facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16720 individuals take part in organised or enhanced sporting activities.
Local economy and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75,000 visitors to the park spend varying amounts in the local economy

3.4.3 Quantities

It is important to clarify the number in each stakeholder group who will actually experience the outcome that has been identified. In many cases not all of the stakeholders involved will experience change, or indeed may do so to varying degrees. This is a forecast analysis and for some of the outcomes predicted cost savings have been applied and hence quantities are not relevant.

Stakeholder	Numbers	Achieved outcomes	Rationale
Community : occasional users	61,500	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	82 % of those surveyed pro rata

	63,750	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	85% of those surveyed pro rata
	51,750	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	69% of those surveyed pro rata
	42,000	No of individuals who take part in additional community activities	56% surveyed pro rata
Volunteers	24	No. of volunteers who report better self esteem and feeling valued	100% of those surveyed pro rata
	18	No. of new friendships and social contacts	75% of those surveyed pro rata
	18	New of skills gained by volunteers	75% of those surveyed pro rata
	12	No. of volunteers who report improved levels of physical fitness	50% of those surveyed pro rata
Schools and nurseries	850	No of children attending trips/visits to park No of children and young people learning about the environment	Estimated visits per pupil/ child
Users of Football and Cricket pitches	16,720	No of individuals reporting improved levels of fitness	95% of those surveyed pro rata
Local economy/businesses	75,000	Reported amount spent by visitors to Gyle Park	visitors spend an average of £1 each

3.5. Outcomes and valuation

Detailed results from the stakeholder engagement and information collection are represented in the impact map information in section 3.8.1.

3.5.1 Outcomes evidence

The changes (or outcomes) which were identified, following consultation with each stakeholder, are detailed below along with information on how the outcome was measured (indicators). All of the outcomes reported were positive. The outcomes which had to be excluded and the reason for this are listed in section 3.8.3.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	Consultation
	By visiting Gyle Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	No of individuals who take part in additional community activities	Consultation
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	No. of volunteers who report better self esteem and feeling valued	Consultation
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	No. of new friendships and social contacts	Consultation /database
	Volunteers learn new skills	New of skills gained by volunteers	Consultation /database

	By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis	No. of volunteers who report improved levels of physical fitness	Consultation and evidence in research.
Schools and nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities	No of children attending trips/visits to park No of children and young people learning about the environment	Consultation
Users of Football and Cricket pitches	Health benefits of sustained physical activity	No of individuals reporting improved levels of fitness	Consultation
Local economy/businesses	Visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Reported amount spent by visitors to Gyle Park	Consultation

3.5.2 Valuation

Financial proxies have been identified which allow a monetary value to be placed on the changes experienced by individual stakeholders. In each case stakeholders have been consulted on the appropriateness of these measures and given the opportunity to make suggestions on potential financial proxies. These were taken into account in the final selection. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy attempts have been made to link the financial amount to the level of importance placed on the change by individual stakeholders.

Further information on how each outcome is valued is provided in section 3.8.4.

3.6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis

3.6.1 Duration and drop off

Before the calculation can be finalised a decision has to be made as to how long the changes produced will last. In an SROI analysis the length of time changes endure is considered so that their future value can be assessed. The question to be answered is *'if the activity stopped tomorrow, how much of the value would still be there?'*

To predict the length of time changes will continue stakeholder opinion and independent research are both taken into account. There will be variations in the length of time benefits last according to the nature of the change and also the characteristics of individual stakeholders. Where significant assumptions have been required about the likely duration of change these have been considered in the sensitivity analysis in section 3.6.4.

Many of the benefits gained by stakeholders have been the acquisition of new skills and it is expected that these will last three years. This is line with several certified practical skills assessments (e.g. first aid) in which competency levels are expected to last for a defined period. Other benefits have been considered to endure for a year as there is little supporting evidence that they will last longer.

Improvements to physical structures have been assumed to last for a period of 10 years.

Outcomes which will continue to have a value in future years cannot be expected to maintain the same level of value for each of these years. This has been dealt with by assuming that the value will reduce or 'drop off' each year. This varies considerably depending on the particular outcome and is discussed in more detail in section 3.8.6.

Section 3.8.6 sets out the duration and drop off assumptions.

3.6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming

As well as considering how long the changes a service or activity delivers will last, it is necessary to take account of other factors that may be influential. The recorded change might have happened regardless of the service, something else may have made a contribution to it or the service may have displaced changes taking place elsewhere. In considering the extent to which each of these factors have played a part in the total impact a realistic approach should be adopted. The aim is to be pragmatic about the benefits actually provided by the park and to recognise that the value it creates is affected by other events. The SROI methodology does this by taking all these factors into account in calculating the actual impact a project or activity delivers.

3.6.2.1 Deadweight

A reduction for deadweight reflects the fact that a proportion of an outcome might have happened without any intervention. For example volunteers might have gained some of the benefits they experienced by taking part in alternative volunteering opportunities that included environmental activities. The detailed assumptions about deadweight are contained in section 3.8.5.

3.6.2.2 Attribution

Attribution takes account of external factors, including the contribution of others that may have played a part in the changes that are identified. For instance, it is likely that many visitors to the park will take part in outdoor physical activities in other areas, indeed usage of other parks was identified

and recorded in the consultation that was undertaken, and this will contribute to the changes they experience. The detailed assumptions about attribution are contained in section 3.8.5.

3.6.2.3 Displacement

Displacement applies when one outcome is achieved but at the expense of another outcome, or another stakeholder is adversely affected. In the analysis this is considered to occur for a few stakeholders to a limited extent. By way of illustration, volunteers might have taken part in other voluntary activities or have been able to allocate more time to any existing volunteering commitments. The detailed assumptions about displacement are contained in section 3.8.5.

3.6.3 Calculation of social return

Section 3.8.7 details the values for each outcome that a stakeholder experiences and takes into account deductions to avoid over-claiming. These individual values have been added together then compared with the investment in the park provided at section 3.4.1 above.

The results show a social return on investment of around £7 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

3.6.4 Sensitivity analysis

In calculating the social return on investment it has been necessary to make certain assumptions which may include the use of data which is either not subject to universal agreement or which cannot be adequately evidenced. To assess how much influence this has had on the final value that has been calculated a sensitivity analysis is carried out and the results recorded. By doing this the value of the benefits can be expressed within defined limits.

The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

Factor	Assumption	Variation	Result
Increase attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 75%	Between 10% and 85%	7.11
Decrease Attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 75%	Between 0% and 65%	9.87
Reduce high value financial proxies by 25%	£500 and £225	£250 and £112	8.31
Increase quantities of community users by 50%	75,000	112,500	11.13
Reduce quantities of community users by 50%	75,000	37,500	6.10

It can be seen that varying the number of community visitors has the most significant impact on the investment ratio. Although visitor numbers to the park have been estimated a conservative approach has been taken and it is likely that they have been underestimated.

The other factors tested in the sensitivity analysis have limited impact and there can be a degree of confidence that the assumptions made in calculating impact would not significantly affect the final result.

3.6.5 Materiality Considerations

At every stage of the SROI process judgements have to be made about how to interpret and convey information. Sometimes the rationale behind the decision is obvious and fully evidenced, on other occasions additional explanation or information may be required. SROI demands total clarity and complete transparency about the approach that is taken so that there is no possibility of confusion or misinterpretation. Applying a concept of materiality means that explanations must be offered for information that can be interpreted in different ways and which can exert influence on the decisions others might take.

The concept can be of particular importance in ensuring that outcomes for stakeholders are relevant, are not perceived as being duplicated and that the different values individual stakeholders may ascribe to the changes they experience are understood.

In assessing issues that are material SROI requires that various factors are taken into account. Stakeholder view is of paramount importance and from the outset, and throughout the preparation of this analysis stakeholders were invited to comment on the interpretation of data and the inclusion of information. Engagement took various forms including e mail requests for comment, telephone interviews and one to one meetings.

Contribution to local businesses/economy

There is a degree of uncertainty over the figures used for local spending however the figures used err on the side of caution and are tested in the sensitivity analysis. However the contribution to the local economy of the parks go beyond enabling visitor spending. Additional revenues generated by events and the contribution to the local economy of greenspace amenity to businesses have not been considered.

Volunteer outcomes

All the volunteers surveyed stated that they experienced 'a sense of worth as they felt valued by the community'. This was regarded as very important and the subject of several additional comments from individuals. There was a wide range of values place on this at both extremes of the scale. In discussion about how best to value this change it was felt that the most appropriate financial proxy was the cost of the average annual charitable donation.

Surrounding House holders

Consultation with stakeholders who lived in close proximity to the park suggested that the amenity and accessibility it provides were not rated significantly as benefits. This was based on a fairly small sample size and it is likely that this has been underestimated.

Different valuations for health benefits

The physical health benefits for visitors and users of sports facilities have been treated separately as they have been valued differently. Users of sports facilities will gain a much higher benefit through more intensive usage.

Outcome not included in calculation

The total impact of volunteers becoming more physically more active on a regular basis was found to be £371.25. As this will have no effect on the overall calculation as it is of such an insignificant amount it was included in the final calculation.

Applying sensitivity adjustments to key assumptions produces a range for the SROI ratio of between £6 and £11 for every £1 invested.

3.7. Conclusion

This report identifies and values the many benefits delivered by the Investment City of Edinburgh Council makes by maintaining Gyle Park. The social return from investing in the Gyle Park is predicted to be in the region of £9 for every £1 invested.

It is important to stress that this has been done from the perspective of those who will be able to experience the changes.

3.8. Audit trail and impact map information

3.8.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

A small group of individuals which included representatives from City of Edinburgh Council, the Friends Group and other voluntary organisations met to identify and consider potential stakeholders and outcomes.

Stakeholder	Included/ excluded	Rationale
Visitors/Individuals	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Volunteers (Friends of Group)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
City of Edinburgh Council	Included	Funder and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Neighbours (homes/organisations)	Excluded	Considered in other stakeholder groups
Organisations(Local Community Councils, David Lloyd Tennis Club	Excluded	Enabling organisations unlikely to experience any outcomes
Schools (Gylemuir PS and Craigmount HS)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Users of sporting facilities	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.

3.8.2 Engagement methods for ‘included’ stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method of Engagement	Date	Number
Visitors/Individuals	Individual Questionnaire/ Survey Monkey	May – Aug 14	88
Volunteers	Individual Questionnaires	May – Aug 14	4
City of Edinburgh Council	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	3
Schools (Gylemuir PS and Craigmount HS)	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	1
Users of sporting facilities	Individual Interviews and survey monkey	May – Aug 14	19

3.8.3 Outcomes identified but not measured

During the study, some outcomes were identified which were not included in the final impact map:

Stakeholder	Outcome	Indicator and proposed method of measurement	Rational for exclusion
Individual visitors	Opportunity to spend quality time with family	No of individuals reporting improved family relationships. Specific question included in individual surveys	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation.
Local Residents	Local residents have better visual amenity and accessibility	No of residents who have view of park/ No of residents who find it easier to derive benefits from proximity of park	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation
Local economy	Financial contribution from events	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis
	Financial contribution from job creation	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis

3.8.4 Financial proxies

All of the outcomes that were included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	cost of a trip to a gym	£5.50	http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/venues/royal-commonwealth-pool/prices
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors	Stakeholder valuation	£2.50	Stakeholder valuation
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	Average spend on socialising	£2.50	Components of household expenditure, 2012
	By visiting Gyle Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	Average spend on community activities	£2.10	Components of household expenditure, 2012
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	average value of a donation to charity	£140.40	Components of Household Expenditure 2012 £2.70 per week
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	Stakeholder valuation	£500.00	
	Volunteers learn new skills	Introduction to wildlife open course @ £75. plant identification and survey management course @£75 and 1 day orienteering course @£75	£222.50	-

	By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis	cost of session at Commonwealth Pool is 5.50 10 sessions 55	£55.00	http://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/events/corporate-events/
Schools and nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	cost of an outdoor educational experience £4.50 per pupil	£4.50	http://www.rbge.org.uk/education/schools
Users of Football and Cricket pitches	Health benefits of sustained physical activity	Fitness session	£7.20	http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/venues/royal-commonwealth-pool/prices
Local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Estimated contribution	£1.00	Projection of actual reported spend

3.8.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Stakeholder	Outcome	Deadweight %	Displacement %	Attribution %
Community : occasional users	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012.	0%	75% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012	0%	25% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	80% Many other opportunities to gain this outcomes	0%	0% No similar opportunities
	By visiting Gyle Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	77% In the area many other community activities	0%	50% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	National research suggests that 31% of Scottish People volunteer in some capacity	10% Recognition of limited number who will no longer participate in other volunteering opportunities	5% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering opportunities
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	31% National research suggests that 31% of Scottish People	0%	15% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering

		volunteer in some capacity		opportunities
	Volunteers learn new skills	50%	50%	0%
	<i>By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis</i>	25%	25%	0%
Schools and nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	25% Schools can take part in other supported outdoor environmental activities	0%	25% Schools can take part in other supported outdoor environmental activities
Users of Football and Cricket pitches	Health benefits of sustained physical activity	54% Research suggests 54% of people aged 25-54 take part in sport or exercise	0%	25 Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources %
Local economy/business	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	40%	0%	0%

3.8.6 Duration and drop off assumptions

Stakeholder	Outcome	Duration	Drop off	Rationale
Volunteers	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	3	0%	Volunteers tend to remain within project for several years Skills will be retained for some time but not at present level
Volunteers	Volunteers learn new skills	3	0%	Skills will be retained for some time but not at present level
Volunteers	<i>By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis</i>	2	0%	<i>Impact not significant so not included in calculation</i>

3.8.7 Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Impact
Community : occasional users	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	61,500	£5.50	42%	0%	75%	£49,046.25
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors	63750	£2.50	42%	0%	25%	£69,328.13
	By visiting Gyle Park individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	51750	£2.50	80%	0%	0%	£25,875.00
	By visiting Gyle Park people feel a sense of belonging to a community	42000	£2.10	77%	0%	50%	£10,143.00
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	24	£140.40	31%	10%	5%	£1,987.90
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	18	£500.00	31%	0%	15%	£5,278.50
	Volunteers learn new skills	18	£222.50	50%	0%	50%	£1,001.25

	<i>By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis</i>	12	£55.00	25%	0%	25%	£371.25
Schools and nurseries	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities	850	£4.50	25%	0%	25%	£2,151.56
Users of Football and Cricket pitches	Health benefits of sustained physical activity	16720	£7.20	54%	0%	25%	£41,532.48
Local economy/businesses	Visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	75000	£1.00	40%	0%	0%	£45,000.00

Totals

The SROI calculation is expressed as a ratio of return from investment. It is derived from dividing the monetised value of the sum of all the benefits by the total cost of the investment.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total Social Return
Impact Value	£251,715.31	£6,400.69	£5,841.70	0	0	£263,957.70

In this report the following figures were used to calculate the social return on investment.

The total value is £263,957.70; the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value is £30,720.00

The SROI ratio is calculated by dividing the value by the investment.

The social return from investing in the Gyle Park is predicted to be in the region of £9 for every £1 invested.

4. Social Return on Investment Analysis

Hermitage of Braid & Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve

“The park is absolutely essential. It offers freedom to relax and enjoy the environment for people, pets and children. I love the greenery and would always want a house near a park.” - Park visitor

4.1. Introduction & summary of findings

This report describes and quantifies the potential social return from investing in the Hermitage of Braid & Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve (Hermitage of Braid).

The work carried out for this report was commissioned by City of Edinburgh Council and undertaken from February to October 2014 by Carrick Associates supported by staff from Parks and Greenspace, Services for Communities, City of Edinburgh Council.

The period that is considered in the analysis is duration of one year.

The analysis identified those who derive benefits from the park and values some of the changes they experience. These include:

- Individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity and will feel better and be more relaxed after being outside in the park. They will gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have a better understanding of their local environment. By visiting the park individuals will have an increased connection to their local community, meet new people and increase their number of social contacts
- Volunteers will gain a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community by contributing to a good cause. By taking part in meetings and events they will make new friends and increase their social contacts significantly. Volunteers will gain new practical and environmental skills and have improved health as a result of becoming more regularly physically active.
- Schools, nurseries other learning providers will be able to provide opportunities for physical activity and learning in a local greenspace.
- Pupils, students and young children will be able to gain new practical skills, learn about wildlife and nature and to participate in unique learning experiences.
- Groups and organisations will be able to offer access to a natural environment which encourages greater uptake of their service and allows participants in the activities they provide to gain the benefits of an outdoor experience.
- Local businesses and the local economy will gain additional revenue as a result of visitors to the park

It was found that every £1 invested would generate around £7 of benefits. By applying a sensitivity analysis, or varying any assumptions made in the calculation, the value of the benefits derived ranges from £5 to £8.

4.1.1 Background - Hermitage of Braid & Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve

The City of Edinburgh Council has classified its parks into four main categories¹⁹. This park is a Natural Heritage Park which is defined as a 'semi-natural green space usually large and featuring hills or woodland which maintains biodiversity.'

Edinburgh Corporation acquired Blackford Hill in 1884 and in 1938, the Hermitage of Braid Estate was presented to the city as a public park by the owner John McDougal. The Hermitage of Braid and Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve covers 60.3 hectares and is composed of two distinct sections: Hermitage of Braid and Blackford Hill.

Hermitage of Braid is designated ancient woodland with an accompanying water course - the Braid Burn. It includes Old Hermitage House which contains a visitor centre and other buildings of historical interest. Blackford Hill is an area of grass and shrub whose summit offers a panoramic view of the city. The reserve also includes Blackford Pond which attracts a variety of birds. Of great historical, scientific and geological value, the reserve is used extensively by local people who feel it offers the peace and quiet of the countryside in the centre of the city. It has had Green Flag status since 2011.

4.2. Scope and stakeholders

4.2.1 Scope

This is a forecast of the social return from the investment of City of Edinburgh Council in the Hermitage of Braid; the predictions are based on a one year period from 2013 to 2014.

4.2.2 Activity

The park offers users a diverse natural environment which is managed and maintained by dedicated staff. Additional information can be found in the park's Management Plan.²⁰ This includes the provision of:

- a range of habitats for native flora and fauna
- an historic environment with archaeological sites and monuments
- a paths network with access points and signage

This enables the following activities to take place:

- recreational opportunities
- environmental education
- events
- community based activities.

¹⁹ More detail on the basis for this approach can be found in the Public Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006 and Open Space Strategy 2010.

²⁰

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/903/hermitage_of_braid_local_nature_reserve_management_plan

The park is supported by the Friends of the Hermitage of Braid and Blackford Hill Group whose objectives are to conserve and enhance the park and to engage and involve the local community.

4.2.3 Stakeholder identification and consultation

All those who were likely to experience change as a result of the project (the stakeholders), were identified, the nature of any changes that might be experienced considered and how such changes might be measured explored. At the end of the discussions a list of those organisations or individuals whom it was believed would be significantly affected was drawn up (the 'included' stakeholders). Details about the rationale for including these stakeholders are provided in section 4.8.1. A list of those whom it was thought would not experience significant change, and hence it was not considered appropriate to contact for further discussion, was also identified (the 'excluded' stakeholders). More details on this group and the reason for their exclusion can be found in section 4.8.1.

A consultation plan was established for each of the identified stakeholders using methodologies that best suited their individual needs. Consultation was carried out by Carrick Associates and facilitated by staff at City of Edinburgh Council's Parks and Greenspace Services. Section 4.8.2 sets out the engagement methods used for each stakeholder.

Stakeholders were consulted initially to confirm possible outcomes that had been identified as a result of discussion with staff from City of Edinburgh Council, volunteers and representatives from locally based organisations. Details can be found in section 4.8.2

Stakeholders were consulted, in a variety of ways, at all stages of the process.

4.3. Change from the stakeholder perspective

4.3.1 Individual visitors

"This is very off the beaten track for tourists, but a real daily pleasure for we locals that live in this part of town. Hills, rivers, thick overgrown woods, it's all here and just a short bus ride from the city centre. If you want to get some air in your lungs without leaving the city - this area is an excellent place to visit."

Quote from Trip Advisor Visited September 2014

By visiting the park individual visitors of all ages and abilities are able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a safe and accessible natural environment. Individuals can take part in a variety of physical activities which range from taking the dog for a walk to cycling.

"Walk for your health, I have bad legs but love to amble in the park"

"Can walk and talk – and spend time with daughter"

"Helped me cope with stress. My husband died of cancer and the park helps me get out with the dog and reduces stress"

"Relaxing, if I didn't get out in the park I don't know what I would do I feel so relaxed and happy here"

"Really like park I have arthritis but still get out here"

"Good for exercise, good for fresh air and environment, good to think about your "life"

"Being able to get out fresh air and exercise very important. I live in a top floor flat so town parks are essential"

Visitor comments

Hermitage of Braid has a rich and varied natural environment and offers the opportunity to be outdoors and enjoy the scenery and to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park.

"It's invaluable for everyone, people need to get out of city streets and understand nature"

"We are lucky to have it nearby, so close, enjoy seeing it through seasons, we take back ideas from it into our garden"

"Fresh air, rivers/water for paddling, bees, see wildlife- it has it all!"

"Important for my children to learn about nature in this green place. There is fresh air with running water"

"It offers a good walk with bird watching and looking at wild flowers"

"Invaluable for everyone, people need to get off our city streets and understand nature"

Visitor comments

For many visitors, the park is part of their local community and offers the chance to meet new and existing friends. This could be on the commute to work or whilst sitting enjoying the views or watching the ducks.

"Views are marvellous, looking down over the city and sharing the view is the best"

"I love the freedom and the fresh air, the dogs love it too. I bring the grandkids here and they meet new people. The new path have made it easier to access. The park's a fantastic place it has so many different aspects. I have been coming here for 30 years. I can't imagine my life without the park."

Visitor Comments

Although perhaps not one of the more common uses, and certainly one whose benefits are extremely hard to value, the park has contributed to the courtship and lengthy marriage of one couple!

"I started courting her (my wife) 60 years ago and it was a cheap date, all these years later we are still coming here."

4.3.2 Local groups and organisations

Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment and in this way to provide better quality services to their members or users.

"Having a natural resource in an urban area offers so much more potential for what can be delivered by the sessions."

Active Schools Co-ordinator

"It's great being able to take the young people to a local site they can return to. It's like being in the countryside in a quiet space but with lots of nooks and crannies full of diversity for exploring"

Green Team

“Our group gains much enjoyment from being in the natural woodlands around the Hermitage of Braid - we especially value the biodiversity that is present in the Hermitage of Braid. This means we can learn valuable Identification skills.

We appreciate the different types of environment; such as the meadow vs the woodland, so that we can compare the different plants and animals that inhabit these different niches.

I personally recognise the importance of natural spaces in giving young people a break from other stresses they may have in their life and this has certainly been voiced by at least one member of the group. The young people can relax and have fun in an environment such as the Hermitage of Braid”

RSPB

4.3.3 Volunteers

By organising events and activities to maintain and encourage the use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to their community and contributing to a good cause. They also reported learning new skills and forming new friendships. By taking part in activities volunteers are more physically active on a regular basis.

“It is good to be part of a small team tasked with liaising with the Council staff whilst at the same time thinking about the end users. One’s input has to be carefully considered so it is intellectually stimulating being involved in a Friends group as well as leading to an expansion of one’s horizons “

Volunteer

4.3.4 Schools, nurseries and youth groups

By visiting the park and taking part in activities schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities. The real life, hands on experience which this offers to pupils who are supported to engage directly with their environment offers a unique learning experience and makes a valuable contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence.

“Children seem so engaged when they are outdoors. They are full of questions and excitement. The enthusiasm lasts even when they get back to class!”

Primary Teacher.

4.3.5 School pupils, students and children

Hermitage of Braid offers students and school pupils the opportunity to gain new practical skills and to learn about wildlife and nature.

“There was so much to see and do. I saw lots of birds and there were so many trees.”

“It was just brilliant I told my wee brother all about when you climbed the hill you could see our house.”

Primary pupils

4.3.6 Local businesses and the local economy

It should be pointed out that this aspect of the analysis was limited in scope and focussed on trying to identify the potential economic value of the park by asking visitors how much they had or would spend in the local area as a result of their visit. It didn’t take account of any other beneficial economic effects.

“We’ve bought some food for a picnic beside the burn” -

Visitors

4.4. Inputs and outputs

4.4.1 Investment (inputs)

The money invested by the stakeholders below was used to pay employee costs, property costs, transport costs, supplies and services and support services.

Stakeholder	Description	Amount
Volunteers	<i>382 volunteers during year</i>	18401.5
City of Edinburgh Council	Estimated revenue spend plus average annual capital spend.	£206,000.00
Total inputs for April 13 to March 14		£224,401.50

4.4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place as a result of the inputs. These activities or outputs will lead to change (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Relevant outputs
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are an estimated 250,000 visits to the park each year
Local Groups and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local groups and organisations are able to provide 30 sessions using the park as a natural environment to provide services to their members/ clients
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 382 volunteers support the park through taking part in a variety of activities and events and provide dedicated support on at least 3 occasions.
Schools, nurseries and youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and nurseries are able to provide opportunities for outdoor learning attended by 890 children and young people who gain new skills and learn more about the environment and nature
Local economy and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 250,000 visitors to the park spend varying amounts in the local economy

4.4.3 Quantities

It is important to clarify the number in each stakeholder group who will actually experience the outcome that has been identified. In many cases not all of the stakeholders involved will experience change, or indeed may do so to varying degrees. This is a forecast analysis and for some of the outcomes predicted cost savings have been applied and hence quantities are not relevant.

Stakeholder	Numbers	Achieved outcomes	Rationale
Community : occasional users	235,000	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	94 % of those surveyed pro rata
	240,000	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	96% of those surveyed pro rata

	147,500	No of individuals who report increased awareness and understanding of the local environment	59% of those surveyed pro rata
	100,000	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	40% of those surveyed pro rata
	135000	No of individuals who report an increased connection to their local community	54% of those surveyed pro rata
Volunteers	382	No of volunteers who report better self esteem and feeling valued	100% of those surveyed pro rata
	115	No. of new friendships and social contacts	30% of those surveyed pro rata
	210	No. of skills gained by volunteers	55% of those surveyed pro rata
	286	No. of volunteers who report improved levels of physical fitness	75% of those surveyed pro rata
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	850	No of children attending trips/visit to park	Estimated visits per pupil/child
School pupils, students and children	489	No of pupils and students reporting the acquisition of new skills	55% of those surveyed pro rata
	890	No of pupils and students taking part in environmental activities in the park	100% of those surveyed pro rata
Organisations and Community Groups	30	No of sessions delivered in park/ No of participants who report access to park as positive enhancement to service	100% of those surveyed
local economy/businesses	250000	Reported amount spent by visitors to Hermitage of Braid	Visitors spend an average of £3.12 each

4.5. Outcomes and valuation

Detailed results from the stakeholder engagement and information collection are represented in the impact map information in section 4.8.

4.5.1 Outcomes evidence

The changes (or outcomes) which were identified, following consultation with each stakeholder, are detailed below along with information on how the outcome was measured (indicators). All of the outcomes reported were positive. The outcomes which had to be excluded and the reason for this are listed in section 4.8.3.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	No of individuals who report increased awareness and understanding of the local environment	Consultation
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	Consultation
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid people feel a sense of belonging to a community	No of individuals who report an increased connection to their local community	Consultation
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	No of volunteers who report better self esteem and feeling valued	Consultation
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	No of new friendships and social contacts	Consultation /database
	Volunteers learn new skills	No of skills gained by volunteers	Consultation /database
	By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis	No of volunteers who report improved levels of physical fitness	Consultation and evidence in research.
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	No of children attending trips/visit to park	Consultation

School pupils, students and children	By visiting Hermitage of Braid students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	No of pupils and students reporting the acquisition of new skills	Consultation
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	No of pupils and students taking part in environmental activities in the park	Consultation
Organisations and Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment to provide services to their members/ clients	No of sessions delivered in park/ No of participants who report access to park as positive enhancement to service	Consultation
local economy businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Reported amount spent by visitors to Hermitage of Braid	Consultation

4.5.2 Valuation

Financial proxies have been identified which allow a monetary value to be placed on the changes experienced by individual stakeholders. In each case stakeholders have been consulted on the appropriateness of these measures and given the opportunity to make suggestions on potential financial proxies. These were taken into account in the final selection. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy attempts have been made to link the financial amount to the level of importance placed on the change by individual stakeholders.

Further information on how each outcome is valued is provided in section 4.8.4.

4.6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis

4.6.1 Duration and drop off

Before the calculation can be finalised a decision has to be made as to how long the changes produced will last. In an SROI analysis the length of time changes endure is considered so that their future value can be assessed. The question to be answered is *'if the activity stopped tomorrow, how much of the value would still be there?'*

To predict the length of time changes will continue stakeholder opinion and independent research are both taken into account. There will be variations in the length of time benefits last according to the nature of the change and also the characteristics of individual stakeholders. Where significant assumptions have been required about the likely duration of change these have been considered in the sensitivity analysis in Section 4.6.4.

Many of the benefits gained by stakeholders have been the acquisition of new skills and it is expected that these will last three years. This is line with several certified practical skills assessments (e.g. first aid) in which competency levels are expected to last for a defined period. Other benefits have been considered to endure for a year as there is little supporting evidence that they will last longer.

Improvements to physical structures have been assumed to last for a period of 10 years.

Outcomes which will continue to have a value in future years cannot be expected to maintain the same level of value for each of these years. This has been dealt with by assuming that the value will reduce or 'drop off' each year. This varies considerably depending on the particular outcome and is discussed in more detail in section 4.8.6

Section 4.8.6 sets out the duration and drop off assumptions.

4.6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming

As well as considering how long the changes a service or activity delivers will last, it is necessary to take account of other factors that may be influential. The recorded change might have happened regardless of the service, something else may have made a contribution to it or the service may have displaced changes taking place elsewhere. In considering the extent to which each of these factors have played a part in the total impact a realistic approach should be adopted. The aim is to be pragmatic about the benefits actually provided by the park and to recognise that the value it creates is affected by other events. The SROI methodology does this by taking all these factors into account in calculating the actual impact a project or activity delivers.

4.6.2.1 Deadweight

A reduction for deadweight reflects the fact that a proportion of an outcome might have happened without any intervention. For example volunteers might have gained some of the benefits they experienced by taking part in alternative volunteering opportunities that included environmental activities. The detailed assumptions about deadweight are contained in section 4.8.5.

4.6.2.2 Attribution

Attribution takes account of external factors, including the contribution of others that may have played a part in the changes that are identified. For instance, it is likely that many visitors to the park will take part in outdoor physical activities in other areas, indeed usage of other parks was identified and recorded in the consultation that was undertaken, and this will contribute to the changes they experience. The detailed assumptions about attribution are contained in section 4.8.5.

4.6.2.3 Displacement

Displacement applies when one outcome is achieved but at the expense of another outcome, or another stakeholder is adversely affected. In the analysis this is considered to occur for a few stakeholders to a limited extent. By way of illustration, volunteers might have taken part in other voluntary activities or have been able to allocate more time to any existing volunteering commitments. The detailed assumptions about displacement are contained in section 4.8.5.

4.6.3 Calculation of social return

Section 4.8.7 details the values for each outcome that a stakeholder experiences and takes into account deductions to avoid over-claiming. These individual values have been added together then compared with the investment in the park provided at section 4.4.1 above.

The results show a social return on investment of around £7 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

4.6.4 Sensitivity analysis

In calculating the social return on investment it has been necessary to make certain assumptions which may include the use of data which is either not subject to universal agreement or which

cannot be adequately evidenced. To assess how much influence this has had on the final value that has been calculated a sensitivity analysis is carried out and the results recorded. By doing this the value of the benefits can be expressed within defined limits.

The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

Factor	Assumption	Variation	Result
Increase attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 75%	Between 10% and 85%	5.24
Decrease Attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 75%	Between 0% and 65%	7.59
Reduce high value financial proxies by 25%	£500 and £250	£259 and £125	6.25
Increase quantities of community users by 50%	250,000	500,000	8.31
Reduce quantities of community users by 50%	250,000	125,000	4.8
Reduce visitor spend by 50%	£3.12	£1.56	5.47

It can be seen that varying the number of community visitors has the most significant impact on the investment ratio. Although visitor numbers to the park have been estimated a conservative approach has been taken and it is likely that they have been underestimated.

The factors tested in the sensitivity analysis have limited impact and there can be a degree of confidence that the assumptions made in calculating impact would not significantly affect the final result.

Applying sensitivity adjustments to key assumptions produces a range for the SROI ratio of between £5 and £8 for every £1 invested

4.6.5 Materiality Considerations

At every stage of the SROI process judgements have to be made about how to interpret and convey information. Sometimes the rationale behind the decision is obvious and fully evidenced, on other occasions additional explanation or information may be required. SROI demands total clarity and complete transparency about the approach that is taken so that there is no possibility of confusion or misinterpretation. Applying a concept of materiality means that explanations must be offered for information that can be interpreted in different ways and which can exert influence on the decisions others might take.

The concept can be of particular importance in ensuring that outcomes for stakeholders are relevant, are not perceived as being duplicated and that the different values individual stakeholders may ascribe to the changes they experience are understood.

In assessing issues that are material SROI requires that various factors are taken into account. Stakeholder view is of paramount importance and from the outset, and throughout the preparation of this analysis stakeholders were invited to comment on the interpretation of data and the inclusion

of information. Engagement took various forms including e mail requests for comment, telephone interviews and one to one meetings.

Contribution to local businesses/economy

There is a degree of uncertainty over the contribution to the local economy as a result of visitor spending. This is tested in the sensitivity analysis which suggests that a reduction to the extent of 50% does not have a significant impact on the result. However the contribution to the local economy made by the park goes beyond enabling visitor spending. Additional revenues generated by events and programmed activities have not been considered.

Common outcomes

Visitors and volunteers each identified gaining the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment as one of the outcomes they would achieve. The degree to which the change is experienced and the significance placed on it are different for each stakeholder group and so have been assessed separately. Visitors have intermittent contact with the park and many other factors contribute to the health benefits they experience. Volunteers take part in defined activities on a regular basis and consequentially experience the health and wellbeing benefits to a more significant extent

Avoiding double counting

The health and wellbeing benefits for visitors and volunteers have been treated separately as they have been valued differently. It is possible that a few members of the community based organisations stakeholder group may also have been included in the visitor stakeholder group but the numbers of potential duplicates are very small.

Volunteer outcomes

All the volunteers surveyed stated that they experienced 'a sense of worth as they felt valued by the community'. This was regarded as very important and the subject of several additional comments from individuals. There was a wide range of values place on this at both extremes of the scale. In discussion about how best to value this change it was felt that the most appropriate financial proxy was the cost of the average annual charitable donation.

4.7. Conclusion

This report identifies and values the many benefits delivered by the investment the City of Edinburgh Council makes by maintaining Hermitage of Braid.

The social return from investing in the Hermitage of Braid & Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve of £7 for every £1 invested.

It is important to stress that this has been done from the perspective of those who will be able to experience the changes.

4.8. Audit trail and impact map information

4.8.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

A small group of individuals which included representatives from City of Edinburgh Council, the Friends Group and other voluntary organisations met to identify and consider potential stakeholders and outcomes.

Stakeholder	Included/ excluded	Rationale
Visitors/Individuals	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Volunteers (TCV/ Tiperath)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
City of Edinburgh Council	Included	Funder and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Friends of Group	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Neighbours (homes/organisations)	Excluded	Considered in other stakeholder groups
Corporate Volunteers	Excluded	Occasional use made of park and hence not likely to experience significant outcomes
Organisations/ SWT/SNH/ HLF	Excluded	Enabling organisations unlikely to experience any outcomes
Schools	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Community based organisations (Autism Initiative/ Green Gym)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.

4.8.2 Engagement methods for ‘included’ stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method of Engagement	Date	Number
Visitors/Individuals	Individual Questionnaire/ Survey Monkey	May – Aug 14	157
Volunteers (TCV/ Tiperath)	Individual Questionnaires	May – Aug 14	8
City of Edinburgh Council	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	4
Friends of Group	Individual Interviews/ Questionnaire	May – Aug 14	3
Schools and Pupils (Liberton PS, James Gillespie PS, Edinburgh University, Meadows Nursery)	Quiz/ Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	32
Community based organisations (Autism Initiative/ Green Gym/ ELGT/ Active Schools)	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	8

4.8.3 Outcomes identified but not measured

During the study, some outcomes were identified which were not included in the final impact map:

Stakeholder	Outcome	Indicator and proposed method of measurement	Rational for exclusion
Individual visitors	Opportunity to spend quality time with family	No of individuals reporting improved family relationships. Specific question included in individual surveys	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation.
Community Organisations	Able to provide safer, better organised events which attract increased numbers of participants	No of participants reporting satisfaction with signposting and safety of event	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation
Local economy	Financial contribution from events	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis
	Financial contribution from job creation	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis

4.8.4 Financial proxies

All of the outcomes that were included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	Cost of a trip to a gym	£5.50	http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/venues/royal-commonwealth-pool/prices
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	Stakeholder valuation	£2.50	Stakeholder valuation
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	Cost of an outdoor educational experience	£4.00	http://www.nts.org.uk/Events/Whats-on/Active-outdoors/
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	Average spend on socialising	£2.50	Components of household expenditure, 2012
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid people feel a sense of belonging to a community	Average spend on community activities	£2.10	Components of household expenditure, 2012
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	Average value of a donation to charity	£140.40	Components of Household Expenditure 2012 £2.70 per week

	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	Stakeholder valuation	£500.00	
	Volunteers learn new skills	Introduction to wildlife open course @ £75 plant identification and survey management course @£75 and 1 day orienteering course @£75	£222.50	-
	By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis	Cost of session at Commonwealth Pool is 5.50 10 sessions 55	£55.00	http://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/events/corporate-events/
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	Cost of an outdoor educational experience £4.50 per pupil	£4.50	http://www.rbge.org.uk/education/schools
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Hermitage of Braid students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	Cost of John Muir gathering session to support environmental volunteers	£15.00	John Muir Award Gatherings
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	Cost of an outdoor educational experience	£12	http://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/visiting/admission/
Organisations and Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment to provide services to their members/ clients	Cost of venue	£39.00	http://www.waterofleith.org.uk/hire/
local economy /businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Estimated contribution	£3.12	Projection of actual reported spend

4.8.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Stakeholder	Outcome	Deadweight %	Displacement %	Attribution %
Community : occasional users	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012.	0%	75% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012 .	0%	25% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	25% Limited similar opportunities	0%	75% Multiple sources of gaining information
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	80% Many other opportunities to gain this outcomes	0%	0% No similar opportunities
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid people feel a sense of belonging to a community	77% In the area many other community activities	0%	50% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources

Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	National research suggests that 31% of Scottish People volunteer in some capacity	10% Recognition of limited number who will no longer participate in other volunteering opportunities	5% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering opportunities
	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	31% National research suggests that 31% of Scottish People volunteer in some capacity	0%	15% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering opportunities
	Volunteers learn new skills	50% Research suggest environmental volunteers gain new skills	0%	50% Recognition of potential contribution from other volunteering opportunities
	By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis	25% Research suggest Environmental volunteering involves greater physical activity	0%	25% Based on % of responses from volunteers who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	25% Schools can take part in other supported outdoor environmental activities	0%	25% Schools can take part in other supported outdoor environmental activities
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Hermitage of Braid students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available	0%	0%
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available	0%	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available

Organisations and Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment to provide services to their members/ clients	0%	0%	0%
local economy businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	40% Contribution from other activities not known but considered likely.	0%	0%

4.8.6 Duration and drop off assumptions

Stakeholder	Outcome	Duration	Drop off	Rationale
Community : occasional users	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	3	25%	Knowledge will endure for some time
Volunteers	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	3	0%	Volunteers tend to remain within project for several years
	Volunteers learn new skills	3	25%	Skills will be retained for some time but not at present level
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Hermitage of Braid students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	3	25%	Skills will be retained for some time but not at present level
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	3	25%	Knowledge will endure for some time

4.8.7 Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Impact
Community : occasional users	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	235,000	£5.50	42%	0%	75%	£187,412.50
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	240000	£2.50	42%	0%	25%	£261,000.00
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals are able to gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have confidence in enjoying it responsibly with respect and understanding for the environment	147500	£4.00	25%	0%	75%	£110,625.00
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	100000	£2.50	80%	0%	0%	£50,000.00
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid people feel a sense of belonging to a community	135000	£2.10	77%	0%	50%	£32,602.50
Volunteers	By organising events and activities to maintain/ encourage use of the park volunteers get a sense of satisfaction and feel that they are giving something back to the community and contributing to a good cause.	382	£140.40	31%	10%	5%	£31,640.67

	By taking part in meetings and events volunteers have made new friends and increased their social contacts significantly	115	£500.00	31%	0%	15%	£33,723.75
	Volunteers learn new skills	210	£222.50	50%	0%	50%	£11,681.25
	By taking part in activities volunteers are physically more active on a regular basis	286	£55.00	25%	0%	25%	£8,848.13
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	850	£4.50	25%	0%	25%	£2,151.56
School pupils, students and children	By visiting Hermitage of Braid students and school pupils are able to gain new practical skills	489	£15.00	25%	0%	0%	£5,501.25
	By visiting Hermitage of Braid school pupils can learn about wildlife and nature	890	£12	25%	0%	25%	£6,007.50
Organisations and Community Groups	Local groups and organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment to provide services to their members/clients	30	£39.00	0%	0%	0%	£1,170.00
Local economy businesses	Visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	250000	£3.12	40%	0%	0%	£468,000.00

Totals

The SROI calculation is expressed as a ratio of return from investment. It is derived from dividing the monetised value of the sum of all the benefits by the total cost of the investment. In this report the following figures were used to calculate the social return on investment.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total Social Return
Impact Value	£1,210,364.11	£142,933.13	£108,994.69	0	0	£1,462,291.92

- the total value is £1,462,291.92 the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value is £224,401.50

The SROI ratio is calculated by dividing the value by the investment.

The social return from investing in the Hermitage of Braid & Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve of £7 for every £1 invested.

5. Social Return on Investment Analysis

Princes Street Gardens

“It’s a calm green space in the middle of a city.” - Park visitor

5.1. Introduction & summary of findings

This report describes and quantifies the potential social return from investing in Princes Street Gardens.

The work carried out for this report was commissioned by City of Edinburgh Council and undertaken from February to October 2014 by Carrick Associates supported by staff from Parks and Greenspace, Services for Communities, City of Edinburgh Council.

The period that is considered in the analysis is duration of one year.

The analysis identified those who derive benefits from the park and values some of the changes they experience. These include:

- Individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity and will feel better and be more relaxed after being outside in the park. They will gain information about the wildlife and plants within the park and have a better understanding of the history and environment of the Park and surrounding spaces. By visiting the park individuals will have an increased connection to their community, meet new people and increase their number of social contacts
- Schools, nurseries and other learning providers will be able to provide opportunities for physical activity and learning in a local greenspace.
- Local employers will gain the financial benefits of having more productive employees as the park provides a less stressful route to work and a relaxing location for lunch.
- Organisations will be able to use the park as a natural environment adjacent to a historic landmark and to raise the profile of their event and attract increased numbers of participants.
- Local businesses and the local economy will gain additional revenue as a result of visitors to the park.

It was found that every £1 invested would generate around £17 of benefits. By applying a sensitivity analysis, or varying any assumptions made in the calculation, the value of the benefits derived ranges from £14 to £20.

5.1.1 Background - Princes Street Gardens

The City of Edinburgh Council has classified its parks into four main categories²¹. Princes Street Gardens is a Premier Park which is defined as a large diverse park serving international and national visitors as well as local and citywide. It lies at the centre of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site. It is listed in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscape in Scotland and is of geological and botanical scientific interest. It has a Green Flag.

'Princes Street Gardens are a popular and beloved centrepiece to the city. They are the first sight for visitors as they emerge from Waverly Station and provide a welcome refuge from the hustle and bustle of the city centre for residents and visitors alike.

West Princes Street Gardens is attractively laid out with both formal bedding and a good mixture of trees shrubs, lawns and the world famous floral clock. Facilities include the open air Ross Theatre, cafeteria, refreshment kiosks, events area, children's play area and toilets with disabled access and baby changing facilities. East Princes Street Gardens has tree lined pathways, formal bedding, and well laid out shrub beds. Facilities consist of a refreshment kiosk, toilets with good access for disabled and, for a small charge, a climb up the Scott monument, The Gardens are home to a large and varied collection of exceptional monuments and memorials and also host many varied events throughout the year including Edinburgh's annual Summer and Winter Festivals²²

5.2. Scope and stakeholders

5.2.1 Scope

This is a forecast of the social return from the investment of the City of Edinburgh Council in Princes Street Gardens. The predictions are based on a one year period from 2013 to 2014.

5.2.2 Activity

Princes Street Gardens offer a number of facilities and features that encourage the reported outcomes

- The Ross Bandstand acts a venue for a number of community events throughout the year (including the Firework Festival)
- The Gardens host a number of large scale events during the year (including Christmas Fairs)
- Ample seating in the gardens provides a peaceful retreat for residents and visitors
- The gardens have been assessed as outstanding in terms of aesthetic, historical and scenic values
- As a city centre greenspace the Gardens provide an ideal meeting place and outdoor space for residents of and visitors to the city
- Local schools and nurseries can access a greenspace with both historic and environmental features
- The play area, café , and restaurants provide opportunities for recreation and relaxation
- There are both paths and grassed areas on which to walk and run

5.2.3 Stakeholder identification and consultation

²¹ More detail on the basis for this approach can be found in the Public Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006 and Open Space Strategy 2010.

²² Princes Street Gardens – Management Plan 2010-2015

All those who were likely to experience change as a result of the project (the stakeholders), were identified, the nature of any changes that might be experienced considered and how such changes might be measured explored. At the end of the discussions a list of those organisations or individuals whom it was believed would be significantly affected was drawn up (the 'included' stakeholders). Details about the rationale for including these stakeholders are provided in section 5.8.1. A list of those whom it was thought would not experience significant change, and hence it was not considered appropriate to contact for further discussion, was also identified (the 'excluded' stakeholders). More details on this group and the reason for their exclusion can be found in section 5.8.1.

A consultation plan was established for each of the identified stakeholders using methodologies that best suited their individual needs. Consultation was carried out by Carrick Associates and facilitated by staff at City of Edinburgh Council's Parks and Greenspace Services. Section 5.8.2 sets out the engagement methods used for each stakeholder.

Stakeholders were consulted initially to confirm possible outcomes that had been identified as a result of discussion with staff from City of Edinburgh Council, volunteers and locally based organisations and individuals. Details can be found in section 5.8.2

Stakeholders were consulted, in a variety of ways, at all stages of the process.

5.3. Change from the stakeholder perspective

"The greenery in the sun attracts people like a beach in Australia, it's great to see it busy with so many enjoying it."

"I was born not far from here and love to re visit -it is so quiet and peaceful and I can sit and relax close to both shops and history."

5.3.1 Individual visitors

By visiting the park individual visitors of all ages and abilities are able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a safe and accessible natural environment. Individuals can take part in a variety of gently physical activities which range from playing with the kids to walking with friends.

"It's great to be outdoors especially if you don't have a garden."

"It's a calm green space in the middle of city."

"A nice place to sit and relax followed by a walk with a view. "

"I bring my grandson here on sunny days and he loves it. We both love it because we can walk or run about and look at the flowers and trees."

"Walking in park is good - this is safe space away from road – I bring my son here on the train on days off to play."

Visitor comments

Princes Street Gardens provides a natural environment in a historic setting and offers the opportunity to be outdoors to enjoy the scenery and to gain information about the wildlife, geology and plants within the park

"I go lots of walks but always come back here- I even recognise the squirrels! I never leave here feeling bad. You can see the history of the statues and I love to see people in park enjoying grass area."

"It's well maintained; surely the park is worth at least what people in Queen Street pay for theirs especially when you consider the views and events."

"It is iconic but more than that it is right in the centre of the city I am a Tour Guide and like to sit and wait in the fresh air, it gets me away from the bus and from people."

"It's nice to come through the garden, the grass is better than blacktop, the views from the park can't be beaten, its well taken care off and clean."

"Amazing - away from traffic breathing in fresh air- I have even seen a fox here."

Visitor comments

By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals meet new people, increase their social contacts and feel a sense of belonging to a community

"I have been coming here for 75 years. I was originally from Kent and there is nothing like this there, you are so lucky to have this green space in the centre of the city. "

"It's a great place to relax, nice for people to meet and sit on grass, kids can play with no problems."

"The atmosphere in park is always good, lots of people and activities going on, meeting friends here is great."

"You can visit shops and see the castle so we came to sit and decided where to go together, Life is too hectic but here in the gardens t feels just fine. "

Visitor comments

5.3.2 Organisations

Organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment adjacent to a historic landmark and to raise the profile of their event and attract increased numbers of participants

"It makes an event really special – it adds that magical ingredient."

"Sitting in a concert with the Castle in the background is unique."

Event's Organisers

5.3.3 Employers

Local workers use the park as a more attractive route to work or location for lunch and feel more relaxed, are less stressed and are more productive at work

"It is part of my preparation for a stressful day at work and is the equivalent of an hour relaxing, I love the sounds of the park."

"It is nice to walk through, better than the noisy street."

"Gets you away from office and out to relax for a short time."

"It's nice to get fresh air and spend 1/2 hour having lunch sitting outside- there are no keyboards here."

"I work in the city 2 times a month and it's good to walk and take in the views and flowers at lunchtime."

"It's quiet no traffic - I walk laps of gardens to get my exercise and there are no roads to cross - sometimes I'm joined by workmates during lunchtime."

Employees

5.3.4 Schools

By visiting the park and taking part in activities schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities. The real life, hands on experience which this offers to pupils who are supported to engage directly with their environment offers a unique learning experience and makes a valuable contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence. Activities in which schools and pupils have taken part include:

"Its history, wildlife, a play park and the chance for the children to interact with others all in one place. If we are lucky the sun shines but that's not essential!"

Nursery Teacher

5.3.5 Local Businesses and the Local Economy

It should be pointed out that this aspect of the analysis was limited in scope and focussed on trying to identify the potential economic value of the park by asking visitors how much they had or would spend in the local area as a result of their visit. It didn't take account of any other beneficial economic effects.

"I've just been for lunch and its shopping next." - Visitor comment

5.4. Inputs and outputs

5.4.1 Investment (inputs)

The money invested by the stakeholders below was used to pay employee costs, property costs, transport costs, supplies and services and support services

Stakeholder	Description	Amount
City of Edinburgh Council	Revenue	577,444
	Capital (adjusted)	57, 556
Total inputs for April 13 to March 14		£635,000

5.4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place as a result of the inputs. These activities or outputs will lead to change (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Relevant outputs
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are an estimated 2,733,000 visits to the park each year
Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An estimated 1606000 individuals attend events or activities in an historic setting with access to a natural environment. .

Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and nurseries are able to provide opportunities for outdoor learning attended by 4000 children and young people who gain new skills and learn more about the environment and nature
Local employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An estimated 5000 employees visit the park in their lunch hour or walk through it on their way to work at least once a week
Local economy and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2733000 visitors to the park spend varying amounts in the local economy

5.4.3 Quantities

It is important to clarify the number in each stakeholder group who will actually experience the outcome that has been identified. In many cases not all of the stakeholders involved will experience change, or indeed may do so to varying degrees. This is a forecast analysis and for some of the outcomes predicted cost savings have been applied and hence quantities are not relevant.

Stakeholder	Numbers	Achieved outcomes	Rationale
Community : occasional users	2,487,030	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	91 % of those surveyed pro rata
	2,705,670	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	99% of those surveyed pro rata
	464,610	No of individuals who report increased awareness and understanding of the local environment	17% of those surveyed pro rata
	901,890	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	33% of those surveyed pro rata
	1,093,200	No of individuals who have an increased connection to their local community	40% of those surveyed pro rata
Employers	5,000	No of individuals employed locally who report reduced stress levels as a result of activity in the park	0%
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	4,000	No of children attending trips/visit to park	Estimated visits per pupil/ child
Organisations	1,606,000	No. of sessions delivered in park/ No of participants who report access to park as positive enhancement to experience	100% of those surveyed
Local economy/businesses	2,733,000	Reported amount spent by visitors to Princes St Gardens	visitors spend an average of £9.68 each

5.5. Outcomes and valuation

Detailed results from the stakeholder engagement and information collection are represented in the impact map information in section 5.8.

5.5.1 Outcomes evidence

The changes (or outcomes) which were identified, following consultation with each stakeholder, are detailed below along with information on how the outcome was measured (indicators). All of the outcomes reported were positive. The outcomes which had to be excluded and the reason for this are listed in section 5.8.3.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling fitter	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	No of individuals who report feeling better and being more relaxed	Consultation, reports and research evidence
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals are able to learn more about the local wildlife, environment and geology	No of individuals who report increased awareness and understanding of the local environment	Consultation
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	No of individuals who report meeting people in the park and increasing their social network	Consultation
	By visiting Princes St Gardens people feel a sense of belonging to a community	No of individuals who have an increased connection to their local community	Consultation
Employers	Local workers use the park as a more attractive route to work/ location for break and feel more relaxed and less stressed and are more productive at work	No of individuals employed locally who report reduced stress levels as a result of activity in the park	Consultation

Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	No of children attending trips/visit to park	Consultation
Organisations	Organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment adjacent to a historic landmark and to raise the profile of their event and attract increased numbers of participants	No. of sessions delivered in park/ No of participants who report access to park as positive enhancement to experience	Recorded Data
Local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Reported amount spent by visitors to Princes St Gardens	Consultation

5.5.2 Valuation

Financial proxies have been identified which allow a monetary value to be placed on the changes experienced by individual stakeholders. In each case stakeholders have been consulted on the appropriateness of these measures and given the opportunity to make suggestions on potential financial proxies. These were taken into account in the final selection. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy attempts have been made to link the financial amount to the level of importance placed on the change by individual stakeholders.

Further information on how each outcome is valued is provided in section 5.8.4.

5.6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis

5.6.1 Duration and drop off

Before the calculation can be finalised a decision has to be made as to how long the changes produced will last. In an SROI analysis the length of time changes endure is considered so that their future value can be assessed. The question to be answered is *'if the activity stopped tomorrow, how much of the value would still be there?'*

To predict the length of time changes will continue stakeholder opinion and independent research are both taken into account. There will be variations in the length of time benefits last according to the nature of the change and also the characteristics of individual stakeholders. Where significant assumptions have been required about the likely duration of change these have been considered in the sensitivity analysis in Section 5.6.4.

Many of the benefits gained by stakeholders have been the acquisition of new skills and it is expected that these will last three years. This is line with several certified practical skills assessments (e.g. first aid) in which competency levels are expected to last for a defined period. Other benefits have been considered to endure for a year as there is little supporting evidence that they will last longer.

Improvements to physical structures have been assumed to last for a period of 10 years.

Outcomes which will continue to have a value in future years cannot be expected to maintain the same level of value for each of these years. This has been dealt with by assuming that the value will reduce or 'drop off' each year. This varies considerably depending on the particular outcome and is discussed in more detail in section 5.8.6

Section 5.8.6 sets out the duration and drop off assumptions.

5.6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming

As well as considering how long the changes a service or activity delivers will last, it is necessary to take account of other factors that may be influential. The recorded change might have happened regardless of the service, something else may have made a contribution to it or the service may have displaced changes taking place elsewhere. In considering the extent to which each of these factors have played a part in the total impact a realistic approach should be adopted. The aim is to be pragmatic about the benefits actually provided by the park and to recognise that the value it creates is affected by other events. The SROI methodology does this by taking all these factors into account in calculating the actual impact a project or activity delivers.

5.6.2.1 Deadweight

A reduction for deadweight reflects the fact that a proportion of an outcome might have happened without any intervention. For example volunteers might have gained some of the benefits they experienced by taking part in alternative volunteering opportunities that included environmental activities. The detailed assumptions about deadweight are contained in section 5.8.5.

5.6.2.2 Attribution

Attribution takes account of external factors, including the contribution of others that may have played a part in the changes that are identified. For instance, it is likely that many visitors to the park will take part in outdoor physical activities in other areas, indeed usage of other parks was identified

and recorded in the consultation that was undertaken, and this will contribute to the changes they experience. The detailed assumptions about attribution are contained in section 5.8.5.

5.6.2.3 Displacement

Displacement applies when one outcome is achieved but at the expense of another outcome, or another stakeholder is adversely affected. In the analysis this is considered to occur for a few stakeholders to a limited extent. By way of illustration, volunteers might have taken part in other voluntary activities or have been able to allocate more time to any existing volunteering commitments. The detailed assumptions about displacement are contained in section 5.81.5.

5.6.3 Calculation of social return

Section 5.8.7 details the values for each outcome that a stakeholder experiences and takes into account deductions to avoid over-claiming. These individual values have been added together then compared with the investment in the park provided at section 5.4.1 above.

The results show a social return on investment of around £17 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

5.6.4 Sensitivity analysis

In calculating the social return on investment it has been necessary to make certain assumptions which may include the use of data which is either not subject to universal agreement or which cannot be adequately evidenced. To assess how much influence this has had on the final value that has been calculated a sensitivity analysis is carried out and the results recorded. By doing this the value of the benefits can be expressed within defined limits.

The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

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The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

Factor	Assumption	Variation	Result
Increase attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 90%	Between 10% and 100%	14.72
Decrease Attribution by 10%	Between 0% and 90%	Between 0% and 80%	20.46
Increase quantities of community users by 25%	2733000	3416250	19.82

Reduce quantities of community users by 25%	2733000	2049570	14.72
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It can be seen that varying visitor numbers has the most significant impact on the investment ratio. Whilst the findings are in line in line with robust research and the results of the EPS data this remains the area about which there is least certainty.²³ The other factors tested in the sensitivity analysis have limited impact and there can be a degree of confidence that the assumptions made in calculating impact would not significantly affect the final result.

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5.6.5 Materiality Considerations

At every stage of the SROI process judgements have to be made about how to interpret and convey information. Sometimes the rationale behind the decision is obvious and fully evidenced, on other occasions additional explanation or information may be required. SROI demands total clarity and complete transparency about the approach that is taken so that there is no possibility of confusion or misinterpretation. Applying a concept of materiality means that explanations must be offered for information that can be interpreted in different ways and which can exert influence on the decisions others might take.

The concept can be of particular importance in ensuring that outcomes for stakeholders are relevant, are not perceived as being duplicated and that the different values individual stakeholders may ascribe to the changes they experience are understood.

In assessing issues that are material SROI requires that various factors are taken into account. Stakeholder view is of paramount importance and from the outset, and throughout the preparation of this analysis stakeholders were invited to comment on the interpretation of data and the inclusion of information. Engagement took various forms including e mail requests for comment, telephone interviews and one to one meetings.

Contribution to local businesses/economy

There is a degree of uncertainty over the figures used for local spending however the figures used err on the side of caution and are tested in the sensitivity analysis. However the contribution to the local economy of the park goes beyond enabling visitor spending. Additional revenues generated by events and the contribution to the local economy of greenspace amenity to businesses have not been considered.

Local Employers

In the course of the analysis it was identified that the park was being used by workers in their lunch break and as a route to work. Upon more detailed questioning it was possible to ascertain and value the benefits this provided which went beyond improved physical activity and wellbeing for

²³ ²³ In 2002, the council carried out a limited user survey within Princes St Gardens.

²³ [Land - Outdoor Visits](#)

²³ <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=133&mid=129&fileid=90>

individuals. As the benefits related to greater productivity this positive outcome was held to advantage employers.

Avoiding double counting

The health and wellbeing benefits for employees who use the park at lunchtime have been included in the visitor stakeholder group and have not been valued separately.

Visits and Usage by Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups

There is currently no method for recording the number of visits to the park by schools, nurseries and youth groups or the purpose of the visit. The numbers used in the analysis are based on previous data and the views of locally based officers.

Applying sensitivity adjustments to key assumptions produces a range for the SROI ratio of between £14 and £20 for every £1 invested.

5.7. Conclusion

This report identifies and values the many benefits delivered by the investment the City of Edinburgh Council makes by maintaining Princes Street Gardens.

The social return from investing in Princes Street Gardens is predicted to be in the region of £17 for every £1 invested.

It is important to stress that this has been done from the perspective of those who will be able to experience the changes.

5.8. Audit trail and impact map information

5.8.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

A small group of individuals which included representatives from City of Edinburgh Council, the Friends Group and other voluntary organisations met to identify and consider potential stakeholders and outcomes.

Stakeholder	Included/ excluded	Rationale
Visitors/Individuals (No distinction was made between residents and tourists)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Event's Organisers	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
City of Edinburgh Council	Included	Funder and employer and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Local shops	Excluded	Unable to identify likely outcomes.
Bodies/ Visit Scotland National Galleries/Network Rail/ Essential Edinburgh/ Community Councils/ Edinburgh World Heritage/ Inspiring Edinburgh	Excluded	Enabling organisations unlikely to experience any outcomes
Schools (Holyrood High, Gracemount High, Nurseries)	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Local Employers and Employees	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.

5.8.2 Engagement methods for 'included' stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method of Engagement	Date	Number
Visitors/Individuals	Individual Questionnaire/ Survey Monkey	May – Aug 14	2700
Event's Organisers	Individual Interviews		6
City of Edinburgh Council	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	14
Schools (Holyrood High, Gracemount High, Nurseries)	Individual Interviews	May – Aug 14	3
Local Employers and Employees	Individual Interviews and Questionnaire	May – Aug 14	65

5.8.3 Outcomes identified but not measured

During the study, some outcomes were identified which were not included in the final impact map:

Stakeholder	Outcome	Indicator and proposed method of measurement	Rational for exclusion
Individual visitors	Opportunity to spend quality time with family	No of individuals reporting improved family relationships. Specific question included in individual surveys	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation.
Children	By interacting with others in informal outdoor play children become more creative and confident	This will require more detailed investigation	Although identified by some participants there was insufficient evidence for this to be properly valued and included in the impact calculation
Local economy	Financial contribution from events	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis
	Financial contribution from job creation	This will require more detailed investigation	Highlighted as a potential outcome in research used in the analysis

5.8.4 Financial proxies

All of the outcomes that were included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Community : occasional users	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	cost of a trip to a gym	£5.50	http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/venues/royal-commonwealth-pool/prices
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	Stakeholder valuation	£2.50	Stakeholder valuation
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals are able to learn more about the local wildlife, environment and geology	cost of an outdoor educational experience	£4.00	http://www.nts.org.uk/Events/W-hats-on/Active-outdoors/
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	Average spend on socialising	£2.50	Components of household expenditure, 2012
	By visiting Princes St Gardens people feel a sense of belonging to a community	Average spend on community activities	£2.10	Components of household expenditure, 2012
Employers	Local workers use the park as a more attractive route to work/ location for break and feel more relaxed and less stressed and are more productive at work	12% of average of days lost to sickness	£52.54	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2012 Provisional Results - ONS
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	cost of an outdoor educational experience £4.50 per pupil	£4.50	http://www.rbge.org.uk/education/schools

Organisations	Organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment adjacent to a historic landmark and to raise the profile of their event and attract increased numbers of participants	cost of venue per person	£3.90	http://www.waterofleith.org.uk/hire/
local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	Estimated contribution	£9.68	Projection of actual reported spend

5.8.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Stakeholder	Outcome	Deadweight %	Displacement %	Attribution %
Community : occasional users	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012.	0%	75% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	42% National research suggests 42% of adults made one or more visits to the outdoors per week in 2012	0%	25% Based on % of responses from visitors who indicated they gained benefits from other sources
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals are able to learn more about the local wildlife, environment and geology	25% Limited similar opportunities	0%	75% Multiple sources of gaining information
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	80% Many other opportunities to gain this outcomes	0%	0% No similar opportunities
	By visiting Princes St Gardens people feel a sense of belonging to a community	77% In the area many other community	0%	50% Based on % of responses from visitors who

		activities		indicated they gained benefits from other sources
Employers	Local workers use the park as a more attractive route to work/ location for break and feel more relaxed and less stressed and are more productive at work	50%	0%	50%
Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available	0%	25% Other supported outdoor environmental activities are available
Organisations	Organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment adjacent to a historic landmark and to raise the profile of their event and attract increased numbers of participants	25% Other venues are available	0%	90% Events are well attended in the city centre
Local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	40% Based on % of responses who indicated they gained benefits from other sources	0%	75% Adjacent to a main shopping centre

5.8.6 Duration and drop off assumptions

Stakeholder	Outcome	Duration	Drop off	Rationale
Community : occasional users	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals are able to learn more about the local wildlife, environment and geology	3	25%	Acquisition of new skills will last for 3 years but diminish each year

5.8.7 Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Impact
Community : occasional users	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will be able to access the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor physical activity in a maintained and safe natural environment	2,487,030	£5.50	42%	0%	75%	£1,983,406.43
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals will feel better and be more relaxed after being outdoors and enjoying the scenery in a maintained and safe natural environment	2705670	£2.50	42%	0%	25%	£2,942,416.13
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals are able to learn more about the local wildlife, environment and geology	464610	£4.00	25%	0%	75%	£348,457.50
	By visiting Princes St Gardens individuals meet new people increase their social contacts	901890	£2.50	80%	0%	0%	£450,945.00
	By visiting Princes St Gardens people feel a sense of belonging to a community	1093200	£2.10	77%	0%	50%	£264,007.80
Employers	Local workers use the park as a more attractive route to work/ location for break and feel more relaxed and less stressed and are more productive at work	5000	£52.54	50%	0%	50%	£65,675.00

Schools, Nurseries and Youth Groups	Schools are able to provide outdoor learning opportunities in a local greenspace	4,000	£4.50	25%	0%	25%	£10,125.00
Organisations	Organisations are able to use the park as a natural environment adjacent to a historic landmark and to raise the profile of their event and attract increased numbers of participants	1606000	£3.90	25%	0%	90%	£469,755.00
local economy/businesses	visitors spend money locally as a result of their visit	2733000	£9.68	40%	0%	75%	£3,968,316.00

Totals

The SROI calculation is expressed as a ratio of return from investment. It is derived from dividing the monetised value of the sum of all the benefits by the total cost of the investment.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total Social Return
Impact Value	£10,503,104	£261,343	£196,007	0	0	£10,960,454

In this report the following figures were used to calculate the social return on investment. the total value is £10,960,454; the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value is £635,000.00

The SROI ratio is calculated by dividing the present value by the investment.

The social return from investing in Princes Street Gardens is predicted to be in the region of £17 for every £1 invested.