

# Transport and Environment

10.00am, Tuesday, 21 March 2017

## Cultivating Communities: A Growing Success 2017 - 2027

Item number	8.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards All	All

### Executive Summary

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The new allotment strategy for Edinburgh 'Cultivating Communities: A Growing Success' 2017 - 2027 has been developed in line with the requirements of legislation contained within the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

The report sets out how the allotment strategy has been developed and seeks members' approval for implementation.

### Links

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Coalition Pledges	<a href="#">P43</a>
Council Priorities	<a href="#">CP2</a>
Single Outcome Agreement	<a href="#">SO2, SO4</a>

## Cultivating Communities - A Growing Success 2017-2027

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:
  - 1.1.1 notes the consultation on a new allotment strategy.
  - 1.1.2 approves the allotment strategy Cultivating Communities - A Growing Success 2017 - 2027.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 The first allotment strategy for the City of Edinburgh, 'Cultivating Communities' was produced in 2002 and was the first of its kind in Scotland. Over the lifespan of the strategy the Council committed £306,174 towards the improvement of allotment sites with water supplies upgraded, path networks and security fencing improved and composting facilities, notices boards and toilets installed.
- 2.2 In 2006 the Council opened a new allotment on vacant ground near Bridgend Farm. 54 allotment plots were added to the Council's allotment estate and a further four plots set aside for use by the Bridgend Allotments Community Health Inclusion Project.
- 2.3 A second allotment strategy 'Cultivating Communities - A Growing Challenge' was approved by Council in 2010. The strategy developed the seven objectives identified in the 'Allotments in Scotland - Guidance Notes for Scottish Councils' (Cosla 2007) and focused on:
  - 2.3.1 ensuring adequate provision of allotments;
  - 2.3.2 encouraging other forms of gardening;
  - 2.3.3 providing high quality allotments;
  - 2.3.4 ensuring good administration;
  - 2.3.5 ensuring environmentally sustainable allotments;
  - 2.3.6 developing and sustaining partnership working; and
  - 2.3.7 securing resources.

- 2.4 The objectives of the strategy were delivered through a five-year Allotment Strategy Implementation Plan monitored and reviewed annually by the Council's Allotment Strategy Steering Group.
- 2.5 Key successes from the second strategy include the development of ten new allotment sites and a 35 plot extension to Stenhouse Allotments. Allotment provision has increased over the period of the strategy by 19% and has resulted in the number of Council operated allotment plots now standing at 1,488. The city's allotment plot number is now comparable with the provision in the 1960s, which was 1,150 permanent allotment plots and 357 temporary allotment plots.
- 2.6 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill received Royal Assent and became an Act on 24 July 2015. Part 9 of the act updates and simplifies all legislation on allotments and puts a requirement on local authorities to take reasonable steps to provide allotments and to protect existing allotments. The act requires fair rents to be set and permits tenants to sell surplus produce - other than with a view to making a profit. There is also a requirement for local authorities to develop a food growing strategy for their area and to identify land that may be used as allotments or for cultivation by community groups.
- 2.7 Secondary legislation on allotment provision is being considered and further national consultation is currently being undertaken by the Scottish Government in connection with:
  - 2.7.1 compensation payable by tenants to landlords for the deterioration of allotment plots;
  - 2.7.2 compensation payable by landlords to allotment plot tenants for disturbance; and
  - 2.7.3 compensation payable for loss of crops when an allotment plot is resumed by a local authority.
- 2.8 Allotment guidance notes are also being developed by the Scottish Government on waiting lists, disposal of sites, lease preparation, managed versus non-managed sites, dispute resolution and asset transfer.
- 2.9 Table 1 summarises the results of an allotment plot holder survey conducted in Edinburgh in autumn 2015 and compares results with a similar 2007 survey. Findings demonstrate a significant improvement in customer satisfaction with the service.

Service area	2015		2007	
	Responses	%age Satisfaction	Responses	%age Satisfaction
Condition of plots	479	94%	417	65%
Main paths	472	93%	522	82%
Water supply	493	96%	587	92%
Fencing	453	90%	533	83%
Signage	352	84%	401	63%
Pest control	281	71%	-	-
Rubbish collection	308	67%	415	77%

Table 1: Allotment Survey Results

### 3. Main report

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- 3.1 The overarching objective of the third allotment strategy 'Cultivating Communities - A Growing Success' is to establish a 10 year strategic framework for allotment development in Edinburgh that supports the requirements placed upon the Council by part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 3.2 Four key objectives are defined within the strategy:
- 3.2.1 ensure adequate provision of allotments;
  - 3.2.2 develop a robust management system for allotments;
  - 3.2.3 improve the allotment customer experience; and
  - 3.2.4 adoption of revised allotment regulations.
- 3.3 Each objective is expanded by a series of linked actions that have an associated responsibility lead and estimated timescales. Details of which are summarised within section four of the strategy document.
- 3.4 As with previous allotment strategies, implementation will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Allotment Strategy Steering Group.
- 3.5 A public consultation exercise on the draft allotment strategy ran from 5 September 2016 to 18 October 2016 with a total of 366 responses received from the public and allotment interest groups. Details of the consultation are

outlined within Appendix 2 and an analysis of the comments received is summarised in Appendix 3, along with a response to each comment.

3.6 Consultation feedback was supportive of the strategic objectives. Table 2 summarises the results, with 98% of respondents agreeing that objective 1 'ensuring the adequate provision of allotments' is core to the strategy. There was a similar high level of agreement with objectives 2 and 3 'improving management and improving customer experience' with 92% and 83%, respectively. Objective 4 'adoption of revised allotment regulations', whilst the least popular, had 77% of respondents in agreement. Objective 4 is a requirement of the Community Empowerment Act and this has been highlighted further within the strategy.

Strategy Objective	Agree No.	Disagree No.	No response No.	Agree	Disagree	No Response
1	359	5	2	98%	1%	1%
2	337	20	9	92%	5%	3%
3	304	53	8	83%	15%	2%
4	281	42	43	77%	11%	12%

Table 2: Allotment Strategy Consultation Results

3.7 An analysis of consultation comments show the top five issues raised to be:-

3.7.1 Raise allotment cultivation standards and reduce vacant plot turnover times (46 respondents).

3.7.2 More information and an opportunity to comment on new regulations (46 respondents).

3.7.3 Pleased with the allotment strategy document and the current allotment service (42 respondents).

3.7.4 More sites needed to reduce the allotment waiting list (33 respondents).

3.7.5 Training/mentoring programme on allotments would be useful (30 respondents).

3.8 The following highlights some of the comments received during the consultation:

#### 3.8.1 Objective 1: Ensure adequate provision of allotments:

- Allotments are excellent ways to promote social cohesion as well as learning new skills.
- Allotments help people who have experienced trauma or mental health difficulties.
- More available green spaces should be used for allotments but not at the sake of parks/sports grounds.
- Sites should be evenly distributed around the city.
- It would be wonderful to see some sites in the centre of town.
- Allotments should be allocated to those who do not have access to a garden.
- To begin with new plot holders should be allocated small plots.

#### 3.8.2 Objective 2: Develop a robust management system for allotments

- Overall respondents were positive about the development of a robust management system but some felt that allotments needed to be managed by the Council and not by local allotment committees. A number raised concerns about plots not being used or maintained properly and felt that this could be improved with more staff to manage allotments.

#### 3.8.3 Objective 3: Improve the customer experience

- At least 42 commented that they are pleased with the revised strategy and happy with the current allotment arrangements.
- There were many positive comments about the Council's Allotment Officer's customer service although for those on the allotment waiting list the information on their position needs to be improved.
- Training and mentoring was welcomed by many with at least 30 comments mentioning that training and mentoring for new plot holders would be a good idea.

#### 3.8.4 Objective 4: Adoption of revised allotment regulations

- Approximately 46 comments expressed an interest in the regulations and on seeing the 'old' allotment regulations and many felt they were unable to comment without seeing them first.

- 3.9 In response to the consultation exercise the core objectives will remain unchanged. However, actions taken as a result of the consultation feedback are detailed within Appendix 3. Key changes made to the draft strategy include:
- 3.9.1 Technical changes to section 1.1 Legislation & Policy;
  - 3.9.2 A copy of the current 1921 allotment regulations added as an appendix to the strategy document and a copy published on the Council web-site; and
  - 3.9.3 The introduction to objective 4 'adoption of revised allotment regulations' has been amended to highlight further the requirement of the Community Empowerment Act.

#### **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 The allotment strategy implementation plan lists 28 key actions and the delivery of the actions will be used to measure and monitor the success of the strategy.
- 4.2 The allotment strategy will be monitored and supported by the Allotment Strategy Steering Group which will meet twice yearly during the period of the strategy to review progress.

#### **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 The cost of supporting the implementation of the strategy is contained within the Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries revenue budget.
- 5.2 Core to the strategy is the identification of potential land to support the development of further allotments and to promote, advise and help community bodies who take ownership and/or control of land and buildings in accordance within the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.

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

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- 6.1 The report is not expected to impact on risk, compliance or governance for the Council.

#### **7. Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 The positive contribution made by allotment growing spaces towards health improvement and social inclusion is now well understood.

- 7.2 Allotments are an important part of the city's greenspace resource and available to all.
- 7.3 New allotments are designed and developed to support all groups and existing allotments modified when required.
- 7.4 Discounted allotment plot rentals are available to the students, elderly and unemployed.

## **8. Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 The impact in relation to the three elements of Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes are summarised below.
- 8.2 The allotment strategy supports:
  - 8.2.1 The provision of local grown food to reduce community reliance on imported produce;
  - 8.2.2 The adoption of sustainable crop growing practises including organic gardening, composting & water recycling;
  - 8.2.3 Healthy communities and a healthy outdoor lifestyle; and
  - 8.2.4 Provision of habitats for wildlife.

## **9. Consultation and engagement**

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- 9.1 A draft allotment strategy was distributed for consultation with elected members, neighbourhood teams and stakeholders groups in July 2016.
- 9.2 From 5 September - 18 October 2016 a public consultation, including a customer survey, on the strategy was undertaken. The document was advertised through local associations, on allotment site notice boards and circulated to allotment holders and allotment waiting list customers. Feedback received has been reviewed and incorporated into the new strategy.
- 9.3 The Allotment Strategy Steering Group has supported the Council in the development of the strategy. The group is composed of representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council, the Federation of Edinburgh and District Allotments and Gardens Associations and the Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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- 10.1 Cultivating Communities: A Growing Challenge 2010 -2015  
[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20122/allotments/265/allotments\\_in\\_edinburgh](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20122/allotments/265/allotments_in_edinburgh)
- 10.2 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/engage/CommEmpowerBill>

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## 11. Links

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<b>Coalition Pledges</b>	<b>P43</b> - Invest in healthy living and fitness advice for those most in need.
<b>Council Priorities</b>	<b>CP2</b> - Improved health and wellbeing: reduced inequalities
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<b>SO2</b> - Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health. <b>SO4</b> - Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b> - Cultivating Communities: A Growing Success <b>Appendix 2</b> - Summary of Allotment Strategy Public Consultation <b>Appendix 3</b> - Summary of Allotment Strategy Public Consultation Comments

# Cultivating Communities - A Growing Success

## The 3rd Allotments Strategy for the City of Edinburgh 2017 – 2027



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- 3.1 Objective 1: Ensure adequate provision of allotments
- 3.2 Objective 2: Develop a robust management system for allotments
- 3.3 Objective 3: Improve the customer experience
- 3.4 Objective 4: Adoption of the revised allotment regulations

## **4. Allotment Strategy Implementation Plan**

## **5. Appendices**

- 1. Summary of potential funding and support organisations
- 2. Current allotment regulations
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# 1. Introduction

Allotment gardening provides the opportunity for a year-round healthy lifestyle which is active, socially inclusive and which reflects the ideals of sustainability and well-being. Unlike other leisure activities it provides not only exercise, mental relaxation and lifelong learning opportunities, but a place to make and meet friends along with gathering the harvest of fresh fruit and vegetables. Allotments have a significant role to play in the protection and promotion of biodiversity and provide the opportunity to spend time out-of-doors enjoying nature.

Interest in gardening and allotments has risen dramatically over the last decade as more people appreciate the social, environmental and health benefits to be gained from the cultivation of an allotment plot. Many factors have contributed to the idea of growing, cooking and eating your own produce, from concerns regarding health and nutrition, to raised awareness of climate change and the rise in “lifestyle” television programmes. In 1998 the waiting list for an allotment in Edinburgh was 417 for 1,065 plots, now, in 2016, it stands at 2,510 for just 1,488 Council operated plots.

The City of Edinburgh Council produced its first allotment strategy “Cultivating Communities” in 2002. This was followed by “Cultivating Communities – A Growing Challenge” in 2009. This strategy, “Cultivating Communities - A Growing Success” continues the themes of its predecessors and aims to provide a strategic approach to the planning and management of allotments for the next 10 years.

“Cultivating Communities” was considered a great success. It was instrumental in improving the quality of allotments across the city between 2002 and 2009 and influential in the development of support for allotments throughout the city and at government level. Its successor, “A Growing Challenge” was similarly successful in giving even more people the opportunity to grow their own food by increasing the number of allotments in Edinburgh and by promoting other food growing initiatives. It focussed on a strategic approach to accommodate the unprecedented demand for allotments and aimed to ensure that the benefits of allotment gardening were properly recognised and available to all. In addition, an Implementation Plan was developed to support the strategy and to guide the work of the Council’s Allotment Service.

This strategy and the Implementation Plan within it has been written in consultation with Edinburgh’s Allotment Strategy Steering Group, which includes representatives of the Federation of Edinburgh and District Allotments and Garden Associations (FEDAGA) and Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society (SAGS), allotment holders, and the city’s Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries Service.

The strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and a detailed review carried out after five years. The Allotment Strategy Steering Group will actively monitor progress of the Implementation Plan ensuring, where possible, that key milestones are attained.

## 1.1 Legislation & Policy

### 1.1.1 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act came into force on 17 June 2015 and section 9 of the act looks to simplify the law regarding allotments. Local authorities now have to manage waiting lists for allotments and take reasonable steps to address high levels of demand. Councils also have to seek permission from Scottish Ministers before they sell off land used for allotments or use it for something else. Finally, local authorities have to report on their allotment provision every year and have to enforce active regulations relating to allotment plot holders.

The provisions of the 2015 Act relating to allotments seek to:

- Increase the number of allotments
- Increase the amount of land made available to communities to grow their own food
- Make it easier for communities to take over land for allotments and other “Grow Your Own” purposes
- Update and simplify existing allotments legislation

The main areas of new policy include:

- The formal definition of an allotment
- A duty on local authorities to hold and maintain allotment waiting lists
- A duty on local authorities to provide allotments and to keep waiting lists below a set target
- A duty for local authorities to publish an annual report and produce a food growing strategy
- A duty for local authorities to produce new allotment regulations
- Protection of allotment sites from closure
- Allowing the sale of surplus produce

The Act places a duty on local authorities to provide allotment sites. These allotments will be provided principally to people on the allotments waiting list. Allotment provision is demand led and the waiting list will record all those who want to let an allotment plot. The Act replaces the provisions within the Allotments (Scotland) Acts 1892, 1922 and 1950, which are repealed in their entirety.

In Edinburgh, Allotment Regulations were initially verified by the Secretary of State for Scotland in 1913, and amended in 1924. They govern a number of aspects of the City of Edinburgh Council’s allotment provision, including the fixing of rents and have not been amended since 1924. Revised regulations have now been produced by the Council, however further development has been delayed pending consultation and the final enactment of secondary legislation to be contained within Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.

### 1.1.2 Policy Context

Allotment provision is influenced by a number of national and local policies. Scottish Planning Policy (2014) introduces a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development. Guiding principles of this relevant to greenspace include improving health and wellbeing by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation.

Paragraph 227 states that “Local development plans should safeguard existing and potential allotment sites to ensure that local authorities meet their statutory duty to provide allotments where there is a proven demand. Plans should also encourage opportunities for a range of growing spaces”.

Several sites allocated for housing led development in the Local Development Plan include opportunities to provide allotments (e.g. Newmills Road, Balerno, Leith Links Seaward Extension, Brunstane, Curriemuirend and Mordunvale). Residential expansion of Newcraighall village includes provision for 16 full size allotments to be managed by the Council.

In order for allotments created through private-sector development to be adopted by the Council, all boundary treatments, signage, storage, paths, water supply and other required facilities for plot-holders must be fully implemented and defect free at handover. At the pre-application stage, the suitability of soils on-site should be evaluated and protected during construction works.

Comprehensive advice can be found in Scotland’s Allotment Design Guide produced by Scottish Allotment Gardens. Design of external spaces is covered by Policy Des 8 Public Realm and Landscape Design in the Local Development Plan.

The Central Scotland Green Network was launched in May 2010 and the City of Edinburgh Council signed a declaration in 2012 committing to deliver its objectives. It aims to co-ordinate the efforts of a number of bodies, including local authorities, community organisations and land owners in order to create and support a network of quality green spaces for recreation, including cycling and walking networks, public woodland areas, parks and also growing spaces for local food production such as allotments and community gardens.

The Council is a lead partner in Edible Edinburgh, a group of organisations, charities, businesses and individuals working together to promote sustainable food in the city. Allotment gardening supports the Edible Edinburgh Plan by making land available for food production and through strengthening communal activities around food.

### **1.1.3 Edinburgh Open Space Strategy**

The nationally consistent approach to planning for future open space needs and protecting and improving existing open space is through an Open Space Audit & Strategy. Edinburgh’s first Open Space Strategy (2010) ensured that a co-ordinated approach was taken to protecting and developing the city’s network of open space and was accompanied by 12 action plans, one for each Neighbourhood Partnership area, setting out site-specific proposals for change in open spaces.

The Open Space Strategy supports the expansion of the city’s allotment supply. It also recognises that secure allotments may restrict access for other open space needs. Therefore potential allotment sites should always be considered against the Strategy’s standards for access to local and large green spaces.

The revised Open Space Strategy (2016) will encourage masterplans for future development to include provision for allotments and community growing as part of placemaking. This statutory document includes reference to allotments, the Allotment Strategy, and the Council’s obligations to support food growing under the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.

#### **1.1.4 Sustainable Cities Index**

The Sustainable Cities Index ranks cities on 20 indicators in five key areas: the economy, business, risk, infrastructure and finance. It also breaks the results down into three sub-indices; social, environmental and economic which combine to provide a ranking of each city's overall sustainability. Allotment gardening contributes to the ranking process through delivering beneficial effects on many of the assessment indices, including the percentage greenspace area, life expectancy, obesity rates and greenhouse gas emissions.

#### **1.1.5 Lets Make Scotland More Active**

Lets Make Scotland More Active is the Scottish Government's over-arching policy objective to make Scots active for life. The Scottish Government has made physical activity a national indicator to reflect its importance. Physical inactivity contributes to nearly 2,500 deaths in Scotland and costs the NHS around £91 million per year. An annual investment of £3 million is aimed at increasing physical activity. Allotment gardening supports the policy by allowing citizens the opportunity to participate in a physically demanding social leisure activity.

#### **1.1.6 National Food and Drink Policy for Scotland**

The aim of Scotland's Food and Drink policy is to promote Scotland's sustainable economic growth by ensuring that the Scottish Government's focus in relation to food and drink, and in particular its work with Scotland's food and drink industry, addresses quality, health and wellbeing, and environmental sustainability, recognising the need for access and affordability at the same time. An allotment garden can supply a family with much of their fresh fruit and vegetable needs in an organic and sustainable way.

#### **1.1.7 Health Inequalities**

Reducing inequalities in health is critical to achieving the Scottish Government's aim of making Scotland a better, healthier place for everyone, no matter where they live. Health inequalities can be a matter of personal lifestyles such as lack of physical activity. Allotment gardening is a low cost activity that encourages physical exertion and the production of healthy produce for consumption.

#### **1.1.8 Sustainable Development**

Sustainable Edinburgh 2020 (SE2020) is the Council's Framework for the sustainable development of the city until 2020. Its vision is that "Edinburgh in 2020 will be a low carbon, resource efficient city, delivering a resilient local economy and vibrant flourishing communities in a rich natural setting." The Framework is based on the ten Aalborg Commitments. Allotment gardening supports sustainable food at a low carbon cost.

#### **1.1.9 The Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016 -2018**

The Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2018 outlines a partnership approach to biodiversity across the city. It includes gardening, allotments and food growing, as reflected in the "Action Plan for Green Networks":

Action Number	Site type	Action/Activity	Timescale
G20	Gardening allotments and food growing	Identify sites or projects for the creation of new allotments	Ongoing
G21	Gardening allotments and food growing	Identify and create community gardens in areas of deprivation	Ongoing
G22	Gardening allotments and food growing	Increase the number of people growing their own food and/or the number of food growing areas, targeting areas of deprivation	2018
G23	Gardening allotments and food growing	Increase the number of allotment sites/plots in the city and encourage the lease of appropriate sites to engaged communities e.g. Pilton Gardeners, Duddingston Field	2018
G24	Gardening allotments and food growing	Increase the number of people growing their own food in Saughton Park through working with RCHS and SRUC who will provide learning and teaching resources and courses	Annual

## 1.2 The Value of Allotments and Gardening

Allotments provide many benefits for plot holders and their families, but also to the local environment and community. In terms of individual and social wellbeing they offer physically active outdoor exercise, mental refreshment and stimulus, as well as the production of good value nutritional fruit and vegetables. Less obvious are the wider benefits. Allotments form part of the open space resource of the city, and can be a focus for education and public enlightenment, neighbourliness and social solidarity. Allotment sites also encourage interaction with nature and make a significant contribution to biodiversity and sustainability.

Allotments and gardening contribute to all of the five Strategic Objectives established by the Scottish Government in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, which gives a local authority the power to do anything which it considers is *“likely to promote or improve the well-being of its area and the persons within that area”*.

### 1.2.1 Wealthier & Fairer

Allotments are available to all and are particularly attractive for those who do not have their own garden space. Edinburgh offers allotments on a first come basis and rental discounts are available to those citizens who are unemployed, students or who are over state retirement age.

### 1.2.2 Healthier

Gardening is an excellent way to keep physically fit and is an important activity for mental wellbeing. Current recommendations are that adults should participate in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five days a week. Evidence suggests that physical access to nature helps people recover from illness, reduces stress levels and lowers blood pressure.

While the demographic of allotments will undoubtedly change, allotment gardening continues to attract older people. This is a section of society for whom it is key that they take part in physical activity on a regular basis, and the exercise that allotment gardening provides can help keep older people active for longer. This reduces the chances that they will need to be cared for long term by local authorities and other public agencies. Children also benefit from becoming involved in gardening and food production through gardening, and allotments can provide a safe and welcoming space where parents and children spend time together, supporting family learning and intergenerational good practice.

### **1.2.3 Greener**

Allotments contribute significantly to the biodiversity of the urban environment, providing food and shelter to many plant and animal species, as well as functioning as an important link in the green space network. In Edinburgh most allotment holders follow organic growing principles and compost their green waste. New allotment sites developed within the last five years are fully organic and include those at Albert Street, Dumbryden, Baronscourt, Kirkliston, India Place, Inchkeith, Hawkhill & Nisbet, Northfield Drive, Drumbrae and Victoria Park.

Allotment gardening develops and demonstrates practices that will mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, including personal behavioural change. They help promote composting, and can be managed in ways that demonstrate sustainable practices like rainwater collection. They also promote local food production, so that “food miles” (transport costs and carbon emissions) are reduced, thus contributing towards the commitments made by the City of Edinburgh Council, under Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, towards emissions reduction targets set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

### **1.2.4 Safer & Stronger**

Allotments are often at the heart of the community and allotment/gardening associations are important contributors to local advocacy and democracy. Volunteering is a central element of allotment management and for many people a starting point for a lifetime of social interaction and active citizenship.

Allotments provide an interactive community of people. While this benefits everyone on a site, it can also be particularly important for individuals who might otherwise be isolated, such as older people, the unemployed, or those with health issues. Several Edinburgh allotments have links with environmental and care charities, schools and other bodies, further increasing interaction opportunities.

This is equally applicable in new residential areas around the city, where modern housing and flats often have smaller gardens than in the past. As a meeting place, allotments and community growing spaces can help new residents forge bonds with their neighbours and the wider community.

### **1.2.5 Smarter**

Gardening involves many practical and academic skills, and has been shown to have immense benefits as part of neurological and social rehabilitation projects. Many allotments are used to develop learning and engagement in sustainable development, including horticultural therapy for those with learning difficulties and/or seeking better life opportunities. For many, they also act as a catalyst for lifelong learning and formal education.

## 1.3 Allotments in Edinburgh

### 1.3.1 Allotment Provision

In 2010 Edinburgh had 34 allotment sites through a mix of Council and other ownership. Between 2011 and 2015 the Stenhouse allotments were extended and a further additional 11 sites were developed at Kirkliston, Albert Street, Inchkeith, India Place, Hawkhill / Nisbet, Drumbrae, Baronscourt, Prestonfield, Northfield Drive, Dumbryden and Victoria Park. One small single plot site at Morningside Station was removed. There are now a total of 44 sites, all with a variety of plot sizes. A Council Allotment Officer is responsible for the majority of these sites. Management duties include the letting of plots, invoicing of rents, operation of waiting lists, the maintenance requirements of each site and the development of new sites. In total there are now 1,724 allotment plots (Table 1) of which the Council directly manages 1,488. Many allotments have local associations that provide help and support with the operation of their site. There are also privately owned and “Common Good” sites which are managed and maintained exclusively by site committees.

Allotment plots are allocated to those furthest up the allotment waiting list wishing to rent a vacant plot at a relevant site. However, when new sites are created 50% of plots are let in this way and the remaining plots offered to residents living in close proximity to the site. At the time of writing, there are 2,510 people on the Council’s allotment plot waiting list. The turnover for allotments is currently 8% per year. Average waiting times for an allotment plot range between five and ten years. The waiting list is regularly reviewed to ensure those nearing the top of the list remain interested in renting an allotment plot. Details of those on the waiting list are not shared with partnership organisation without prior permission.

60% of allotment plot holders live within 2 miles of their plot. The demand for an allotment plot is greatest in the traditional tenement flat areas of the city (Table 2). It would therefore be reasonable to assume that demand is highest in areas where there is little or no access to garden space.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act recognises the need for a customer-led service, making it a requirement that those wanting a plot less than the standard 250m<sup>2</sup> in size can specify the size of plot being sought. An allotment waiting list customer survey carried out in March 2016 (Table 3) indicated that a high proportion of new customers prefer half-plots as their first choice. These are therefore increasingly offered. Table 4 provides information on the demographics of allotment plot tenants gathered over the past 13 years. Trends include an increase in the number of tenants aged between 35-54 years of age, with a corresponding decrease in those aged over 55. Male / female split has remained relatively consistent at 47% and 53%, respectively. Interestingly there was a significant increase in allotment plot tenants who consider they have a health condition – rising from 9% to 22% over this period.

Table 5 provides statistics on the turnover of allotment plots and the impact of developing new allotment plots. The table indicates that over 100 new customers per year have been added to the service since 2013.

**Table 1: Allotments in Edinburgh**

Site	Ownership	Operated by	Plots
Dean Gallery	City of Edinburgh Council	Devolved	12
East Scotland St Lane Nth	City of Edinburgh Council	Devolved	7
East Scotland St Lane Sth	City of Edinburgh Council	Devolved	1
Green dykes	City of Edinburgh Council	Devolved	26
Westerhailes	City of Edinburgh Council	Devolved	80
Albert Street	City of Edinburgh Council	Housing	4
Hawkhill and Nisbet	City of Edinburgh Council	Housing	12
Prestonfield	City of Edinburgh Council	Housing	13
Baronscourt	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	20
Bridgend Farm	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	54
Cambridge Avenue	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	10
Carricknowe	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	43
Chesser Crescent	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	13
Claremont Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	62
Craigentiny	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	47
Drumbrae	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	20
Dumbryden	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	33
Ferry Road	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	77
Findlay Avenue	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	7
Hutchinson Loan	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	7
Inchkeith	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	10
India Place	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	27
Inverleith Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	173
Kirkliston	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	7
Lady Road	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	37
Leith Links	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	39
Northfield	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	16
Pilrig Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	38
Prospect Bank	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	11
Redhall	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	48
Restalrig	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	28
Saughton Mains	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	174
Stenhouse Drive	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	70
Victoria Park	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	16
Warriston	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	120
West Mains	City of Edinburgh Council	Parks and Greenspace	89
Midmar 1 & 2	Leased to Council	Parks and Greenspace	163
Craigentiny Telferton	Private	Private	62
Portobello East Junction	Private	Private	25
Relugas Place	Private	Private	4
Roseburn Cliff	Private	Private	4
Slateford Green	Private	Private	12
Succoth Gardens	Private	Private	3
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,724</b>

**Table 2: Allotment Waiting List by Postcode Area**

Post code	Area	No	%age
EH6	Leith	547	19%
EH3	Inverleith	314	11%
EH4	Stockbridge/Barton	288	10%
EH7	Restalrig / Craigentenny	258	9%
EH10	Morningside / Fairmilehead	256	9%
EH9	Marchmont / Grange	191	7%
EH8	Newington / Mountcastle	158	6%
EH5	Granton	129	5%
EH11	Saughton / Sighthill	147	5%
Other	City wide	557	20%

**Table 3: Preferred Size of Allotment Plot**

Answer Options	Most Preferred	Second Preferred	Least Preferred	Preferred Average	Response Count
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
Full Plot - approx 250 - 185 sq metres (approx double row of 8 parked cars)	253	192	225	1.96	670
Half Plot - approx 125 - 92 sq metres (approx double row of 4 parked cars)	370	314	1	1.46	685
A smaller plot - approx 20-25 sq metres (approx single row of 2 parked cars and built off the ground with options for easy access)	82	149	417	2.52	648
Answered Question 707					
Skipped Question 45					

**Table 4: Profile of Allotment Holders**

<b>Age</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2015</b>
<24	0%	0%	0%
25 – 34	5%	3%	2%
35 – 54	39%	38%	40%
55+	53%	58%	53%
No response	3%	1%	5%

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2015</b>
Male	40%	47%	47%
Female	58%	50%	53%
No response	2%	2%	0%

<b>Health condition</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2015</b>
Health condition present	13%	9%	22%
No health condition	80%	84%	78%
No response	7%	7%	0%

**Table 5: Turnover of Allotment Plots**

<b>Allotment Turnover</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Percentage	7%	7%	8%	9%	8%
Number	93	92	113	120	114

### 1.3.3 Allotment Strategy Steering Group

The group is made up of representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council, the Federation of Edinburgh and District Allotments and Gardens Associations (FEDAGA) and the Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society (SAGS). It was formed to oversee the implementation of the first and second allotment strategies, as well as other issues relating to allotments in Edinburgh. The group calls upon experts to provide advice on particular issues as they arise. The group has advised the Council on the production of this third strategy.

### 1.3.4 Funding & Rents

The Council currently commits £99,851 a year on managing and upkeep of its allotments, £17,261 of which is an overhead apportionment. Of this, approximately £80,000 is recovered from annual rents (table 6). Since the launch of Cultivating Communities in 2002 a total of £306,174 has been spent on improving allotments in Edinburgh. A further £250,000 was spent on the construction of Bridgend Allotment site, with funding from the Council and the Big Lottery Fund and support from NHS Lothian to develop the Bridgend Allotment Community Health Inclusion Project.

Plot rents have risen in line with rates agreed in the 2010-2015 Allotment Strategy. In 2016 allotment rents were reviewed as part of the wider Council's budget consultation process and subsequently increased by four percent. Current rental rates are detailed in Table 6.

**Table 6: Allotment Plot Rental Rates 2017**

Full Plot	£104/pa	with concession *	£52/pa
Half Plot	£52/pa	with concession *	£26/pa
Raised Bed	£26	no concession	

\* Concessions available to students, unemployed or those over state retirement age

### 1.3.5 Communication and Promotion

Most Council managed sites have notice boards used by the site association representatives, FEDAGA and the Council to post information. Monthly digital newsletters are published by FEDAGA and sent to those plot holders who have registered an interest. The Council's website provides information on allotment sites, waiting times, management rules, inspections, terminations and appeals. FEDAGA operates a website containing additional information. Some allotment site associations hold open days to allow the general public access to the site and showcase the work and produce of the allotment holders. Other site associations welcome schools to visit their sites.

### 1.3.6 FEDAGA

FEDAGA consists of affiliated Allotment Garden Associations drawn together with the mutual interest of promoting best practices; improvement of conditions; education; training; protection and co-operative trading. All Council owned and managed sites and some independent sites are affiliated to FEDAGA, which represents the tenants of these sites. The Federation operates through an elected Management Committee which meets on a monthly basis.

The group has been in existence for over 100 years and dates back to the rise in interest in allotments which is widely linked to the return of men from the First World War and the high level of unemployment experienced at that time.

In the 1960s and 70s improved employment, an expanding population, the opportunities of foreign travel and the introduction of large supermarkets changed the way that people looked at food, and local produce was deemed passé. Many public and private allotment sites were lost to housing development and cheap imported vegetable products, blemish free and uniform, contributed to the demise of the home grown product.

In the 1990s, with the rise of a younger and fitter retired population, the recognition of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and a re-discovered taste for local produce the demand for allotment plots has outstripped supply. Although 11 new allotment sites have been constructed since 2011, today Edinburgh has a significant waiting list and insufficient resource to create allotments at the rate required.

Table 7 details information on the number of allotments and indicates the number of full, half or raised bed plots. Edinburgh has approximately 26 hectares of land used for allotments.

### Table 7: Profile of Allotment Plot Area by Category

Site	No. full plots	No. half plots	No. raised beds	Total plots	Site Area m2	Approx. Avg size of full plot m2*	Approx. Avg size of half plot m2*	Approx. Avg size raised bed m2*
Albert Street	0	0	4	4	120			30
Baronscourt	0	20	0	20	2,326		116	
Bridgend	45	9	0	54	14,396	291	145	
Cambridge	2	8	0	10	1,762	294	147	
Carrick Knowe	27	16	0	43	8,566	245	122	
Chesser	8	5	0	13	2,395	228	114	
Claremont	20	42	0	62	9,850	240	120	
Craigentinny	41	6	0	47	6,994	159	79	
Drumbrae	0	0	20	20	873			44
Dumbryden	7	26	0	33	7,818	391	195	
Ferry Rd	26	51	0	77	13,460	261	131	
Findlay Av	6	1	0	7	1,703	262	131	
Hawkhill & Nisbet	0	0	12	12	366			31
Hutchinson Loan	0	7	0	7	1,017	290	145	
Inchkeith	0	0	10	10	426			43
India Place	0	0	27	27	1,045			39
Inverleith	83	90	0	173	24,260	190	95	
Kirkliston	0	7	0	7	434	124	62	
Lady Road	13	24	0	37	6,299	252	126	
Leith Links	11	28	0	39	5,176	207	104	
Midmar 1 & 2	53	110	0	163	27,405	254	127	
Northfield Drive	0	16	0	16	1,763	220	110	
Pilrig	9	29	0	38	4,445	189	95	
Prestonfield	0	13	0	13	1,040		80	
Propect Bank	4	7	0	11	1,678	224	112	
Redhall	35	13	0	48	10,957	264	132	
Restalrig	20	8	0	28	5,600	233	117	
Saughton	144	30	0	174	34,368	216	108	
Stenhouse	37	15	18	70	9,055	203	102	
Victoria Park	0	16	0	16	1,544	193	97	
Warriston	78	42	0	120	32,806	331	166	
West Mains	61	28	0	89	18,055	241	120	
<b>Total</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1,488</b>	<b>258,001</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>35</b>

\* Please note the average plot area includes a proportion for site path networks and communal areas.

## 2. Purpose of the Strategy

The first allotment strategy for the City of Edinburgh “Cultivating Communities” was widely acclaimed for improving the standard of allotments in Edinburgh. However, the waiting list continued to grow. The second strategy “Cultivating Communities - A Growing Challenge” has gone some way to tackle this by providing an additional 344 plots of all sizes for rent. However, the number of people on the plot waiting list has also increased, and now stands at 2,510.

Appendix 4 lists the achievements of Cultivating Communities – A Growing Challenge and highlights that only the introduction of revised allotment regulations has not been achieved during the course of the strategy.

The overarching objective of this strategy is to meet the ever increasing demand for allotments by supporting increased allotment provision and by promoting alternative ways to grow food.

Four key objectives have been established:

Objective 1: Ensure adequate provision of allotments

Objective 2: Develop a robust management system for allotments

Objective 3: Improve the customer experience

Objective 4: Adoption of the revised Allotment Regulations

### 3. Strategic Objectives for 2017 - 2027

#### Objective 1: Ensure adequate provision of allotments

##### Action 1.1: Create new community led allotments

Currently there are 44 allotment sites across Edinburgh. Of these:

- 28 are owned by the City of Edinburgh Council and managed by Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries
- 3 are owned by the City of Edinburgh Council and managed by Housing
- 5 are owned by the City of Edinburgh Council but have a devolved management system
- 6 are privately owned and managed
- 2 are leased by the City of Edinburgh Council and managed by Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries

Included within these are 11 new sites that have been built and opened during the lifetime of the previous strategy. Work is now underway to investigate and review a further list of sites with a view to constructing more allotments. The list of sites was drafted using information gathered from a 2015 Allotment Survey and subsequent suggestions, and will be subject to a detailed analysis and appraisal system. Each site will be reviewed and appraised using the following methodology:

- Ownership
- Usage
- Soil Type
- Services
- Plot number per site
- Waiting list demand
- Public Transport
- Housing Area
- Security
- Parking

However, this list is not exhaustive and other appraisal factors may be used as required.

Sites identified will be handled sensitively and in full consultation with all stakeholders. The support and collaboration of users and local communities will be crucial to the success of new sites and effective communication will be required to promote the benefits to the wider community. Therefore, thorough community consultation will be undertaken for all potential new sites.

Findings from consultation will shape the design of new allotment sites, as will the Site Design Guide published by SAGS.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act encourages people who are on the allotments waiting list in a given area to come together and “take on” a piece of local Council ground (assuming that such ground exists).

The City of Edinburgh Council will therefore support communities to fundraise to transform ground into an allotment site and thereafter manage the site. Management could be independent of the Council but there would be an expectation that any independent allotment site would abide by the Council's allotment regulations.

Tables 8 outlines sites that can be considered for allotments, including the evaluation previously undertaken. Table 9 shows an additional list identified by the public through consultation and which will be subject to evaluation.

**Table 8: Sites previously identified as potential allotments**

SITE	LOCATION AREA M2	POTENTIAL ALLOTMENTS	Owership	Usage	Soil	Service	Plot No	Waiting	Transport	Housing	Security	Parking	TOTAL POINTS
Blinkbonny Park	22,021	110	10	2	5	2	20	5	5	5	5	2	61
Gypsy Brae	69,162	345	10	2	5	2	20	5	5	5	5	5	64
Inch Park	12,622	66	10	5	10	5	15	10	10	10	5	5	85
Lauriston Castle	12,716	63	5	5	10	2	15	15	5	5	5	5	72
Midmar field 3	7,750	40	5	5	10	5	10	15	5	5	5	5	70
Silverknowes Farmhouse	16,029	843	5	5	10	2	20	10	10	5	5	2	74
Gilmerton Farm South	12,904	67	5	2	5	2	10	10	5	5	5	2	51
Clermiston Road North	42,814	214	10	5	10	5	20	15	10	5	5	2	87
SAUGHTONHALL TERRACE	3,000	20											No assessment

**Table 9: Additional sites identified for potential allotments \***

Adams Well and Tesco in Colinton Mains Drive - unused area	Granton Harbour - unused land near apartment blocks
Dumbiedykes - adjacent to housing area	Granton Way - disused ground
Anderson Place - unused waste ground	Greendykes area - derelict land former Council Flats
Astley Ainslie - gap sites	Hailesland Park
Baronscourt Park - extend current allotment	Harrison Park - Watson Crescent
Bothwell Street - old railway tracks	Howdenhall Road - wasteland adjacent to lab
Braid Hills Road - land next to children's mini golf course	Hunter's Tryst Primary School Grounds
Buckstone Primary School - field area	Leith Links allotment extension
Burdiehouse Valley Park	Little France - new road area
Buttercup Farm - lower field on Corstorphine Hill	Lower Granton Road
Cammo Estate - recycling site	Mounthooly Road - east field
Colinton Mains Park	Newhaven - wasteland
Craigcrook Road - empty site	Ocean Terminal - land near here NW Victoria Dock
Curriemuirend Park	Oxgangs Avenue - grass beside Cockmylane
Double Hedges Field - lower field Liberton Dams	Parsons Green School Grounds - top gate

East Suffolk Road - playing field site at Royal Blind School	Portobello Figgate Park
Easter Drylaw - near cycle path and school	Powderhall Bowling Green
Letham Park	Rankin Drive - Rankin Triangle
Fettes Police College – grounds	Seafield area - brownfield sites
Lismore Playing Fields	Sighthill Public Park
North Fort Street area	Wardie fields - lots of unused space around the edges
Forthquarter Park	Warriston Playing Fields
Gilmerton Dykes Road - off Newtoft Street	Woodhall Road - past the bypass, opposite the stable

*\* List is for further investigation only. Suggestions may not be available for allotment development.*

In spring 2016 a development opportunity was identified on the old playing field at the former Lismore Primary School on Duddingston Row. The site was transferred to Parks Greenspace and Cemeteries ownership and may be available for the creation of new allotment plots. The area is viewed as a potential contender for the development of a community-led allotment site.

### **Action 1.2: Create new allotments through planning development proposals**

The City of Edinburgh Council will seek to create new allotments through the planning development process. The Council's Open Space Strategy will include reference to allotments, the Allotment Strategy, and the Council's obligations to support food growing under the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

### **Action 1.3: Allotments for all**

The Council will whenever possible ensure that the allotments it manages are designed to accommodate all potential ploholders - ensuring that they are accessible and manageable regardless of an individual's ability. This will be achieved through a range of designs and plot sizes that are appropriate for a site's characteristics.

### **Action 1.4: Allocation of new plots**

When a potential area for a new allotment site is identified a local consultation exercise will be undertaken. It is anticipated that a percentage of the new plots will be offered to the local community, who will be encouraged to register for allotment plots and support development. The basis for plot allocation, unless otherwise agreed, will be as follows:

- 50% from those closest to the site (starting within 500 metres and graduating out until 50% is reached)
- 50% from the city wide allotment waiting list and based on the length of time on the waiting list

## **Action 1.5: Promote biodiversity for new sites**

At new sites biodiversity will be encouraged as a fundamental objective.

The City of Edinburgh Council has a legal obligation to help fulfil the Council's "biodiversity duty" under the Natural Heritage Act 1991 and to this end we will encourage and promote biodiversity by allotment holders and site managers using information such as the 'Gardening in harmony with nature' booklet.

## **OBJECTIVE 2: Develop a robust management system for allotments**

### **Action 2.1: Proactive management of the allotment waiting list**

The waiting list for allotment plots will be developed to ensure that those on the list still wish to rent a plot. The Council will regularly contact waiting list customers to confirm continued interest.

### **Action 2.2: Raising and maintaining the quality of allotment plots**

#### **Plot Inspections**

When a plot does not comply with the standards set out in the Allotment Regulations it is important to identify and address the problem before there is an impact on neighbouring plots. The Allotment Officer will carry out visual plot inspections on a regular basis throughout the year. At the discretion of the Allotment Officer, assistance may be sought in order to resolve matters in a timely manner.

#### **Assessment Criteria**

- Condition of Plot
- Good Management
- Quality of Crops, Fruit, Flowers and Plants
- Aesthetic Aspect of the Plot
- Conditions of Garden Sheds/Other Structures
- Level of cultivation

The Allotment Officer can make allowances for individuals who are ill, disabled, elderly or for extenuating reasons supplied which has led to delay in plot cultivation. Actions taken will be at the Allotment Officer and Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries management discretion.

### **Action 2.3: Process following an allotment plot failure**

When an allotment plot has failed a visual inspection the plot holder will be notified and requested to rectify the situation within 21 days. Insufficient improvement within this time will result in a final warning. In the event that there is insufficient improvement a letter will be sent informing the plot holder of the termination of their missive of let.

Consideration will be given to any mitigating circumstances, which should be communicated to the Allotment Officer in writing by the plot holder or an individual nominated by them.

A plot holder may appeal against the termination within 21 days of the receipt of the termination letter, and will require written support from three of the immediate adjacent plot holders. The appeal should detail the reasons for the lack of improvement and the reasons why the termination letter should be withdrawn.

The Allotment Officer must consider the appeal and reply to the plot holder within 21 days of receipt of the appeal letter.

### **Action 2.4: Introduction and development of water harvesting**

Water harvesting is the collection of runoff for productive purposes. Instead of runoff being left to drain into the soil it is harvested and utilised. Water harvesting is a productive form of soil and water conservation. Allotment site committees and allotment tenants will be encouraged to harvest water in a safe and sustainable manner, ensuring that collection vessels comply with safe practise and present no risk. A water harvesting trial will be developed at the Northfield Drive site to assess the viability and effectiveness of the approach.

### **Action 2.5: Devolved management**

There are a small number of sites that are managed using a devolved model and feedback from the 2015 survey suggested limited appetite for further devolvment. However, if an allotment association expresses a desire to manage their site independent of the Council the Council would consider this under the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.

## **OBJECTIVE 3: Improve the customer experience**

### **Action 3.1: Development of website/social media**

Action to include:

- New allotment group email contact list
- On-line allotment applications
- Development of information video/soundbites e.g. What to expect when first allocated a plot, managing a plot and task of the month.

### **Action 3.2: Initiate and develop a plotholder mentoring programme**

Allotment Committees will be encouraged to organise mentoring programmes and offer support for those struggling to maintain their plot. This will focus on good allotment management and the importance of the community and social aspect of maintaining an allotment.

### **Action 3.3: Initiate and develop a training programme for new plotholders**

The Council in partnership with the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, The Orchard Project and Scottish Rural University College will incorporate provision for a range of different training within the Saughton Park Restoration Project.

New plotholders will be offered the opportunity to meet with site representatives in order to gain an understanding of the site and the standards required.

## OBJECTIVE 4: Adoption of the revised allotment regulations

### Action 4.1: Adoption of new regulations by the Council and Scottish Government

Details of Edinburgh's existing Allotment Regulations are contained within Appendix 2. The regulations will be updated to reflect changes in legislation and be subject to public consultation prior to being ratified by the Council and Scottish Government. The timetable for this is linked to the enactment of secondary legislation affecting Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act. The current timetable for adoption of regulations is outlined below. However, this may be subject to a future revision.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
19 May – 31 August 2016	Tripartite subgroup to develop consultation material	Scottish Government
4 August 2016	Second Tripartite Group Meeting	Scottish Government & Group members
31 August 2016	1 <sup>st</sup> draft contributions	Scottish Councils and SAGS
3 October – 31 October 2016	Legal Analysis	Scottish Government
10 November 2016	Third Tripartite Group Meeting	Scottish Government
14 November 2016 – 6 January 2017	Public consultation	Scottish Government
7 January – 10 February 2017	Analysis of consultation	Scottish Government
April 2017	Guidance Document Published	Scottish Government
May 2017 – November 2017	1 <sup>st</sup> revision of regulations	CEC
November 2017 – January 2018	Public consultation	CEC
February 2018 – March 2018	Analysis of consultation	CEC
April 2018 – May 2018	2 <sup>nd</sup> revision of regulations	CEC
June 2018 – December 2018	Ratification and adoption of regulations	CEC & Scottish Government

## 4. Allotment Strategy Implementation Plan

<b>Objective 1: Ensure adequate provision of allotments</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Create new community led allotments</b>		
1.1.1	Undertake full review of potential allotment sites and evaluation against priority evaluation criteria	CEC	DEC 2017
1.1.2	Support community led initiatives to identify funding opportunities to develop new allotments	CEC/COMMUNITY GROUPS	ONGOING
1.1.3	Provide an allotment design function in accordance with the results of any community consultation and in line with local demands	CEC	ONGOING
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Create new allotments through planning and development proposals</b>		
1.2.1	Support development of the revised Open Space Strategy recognising the Council's obligation to support food growing	CEC	MARCH 2017
1.2.2	Consider options for creating and funding new sites through the planning development process	CEC	ONGOING
1.3.1	Support community led initiatives to identify funding opportunities to develop new allotments	CEC/COMMUNITY GROUPS	ONGOING
1.3.2	Provide an allotment design function in accordance with the results of any community consultation and in line with local demands	CEC	ONGOING
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Allotments for all</b>		
1.3.1	Ensure that new allotments are designed to accommodate all potential ploholders regardless of their circumstances	CEC	ONGOING
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Allocation of new plots</b>		
1.4.1	Encourage local residents to register for a plot	CEC	ONGOING
1.4.2	Apply the plot allocation process	CEC	ONGOING
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Promote biodiversity for new sites</b>		
1.5.1	Encourage biodiversity within allotment sites	FEDAGA/SITE COMMITTEE/CEC	ONGOING
1.5.2	Promote the "Gardening in Harmony with Nature" booklet	ALL	ONGOING

## Objective 2: Develop a robust management system for allotments

No.	Action	By whom	When
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Proactive management of the allotment waiting list</b>		
2.1.1	Contact all customers on the current waiting list to ensure continued interest.	CEC	DEC 2017
2.1.2	Regularly review customers nearing the top of the waiting list to ensure continued interest	CEC	ANNUALLY
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Raising and maintaining the quality of allotment plots</b>		
2.2.1	Undertake a programme of visual inspection	CEC	MONTHLY
2.2.2	Support the Allotment Officer by reporting areas of concern	SITE COMMITTEES /ALLOTMENT PLOT HOLDERS	ONGOING
2.2.3	Develop a mentoring/support system for those struggling to maintain their plots	SITE COMMITTEES/ALLOTMENT PLOT HOLDERS/CEC	ONGOING
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Process following an allotment plot failure</b>		
2.3.1	Issue warning letters to ploholders whose plots are deemed unacceptable following inspection	CEC	ONGOING
2.3.2	Re-assess plot condition following communication	CEC	ONGOING
2.3.3	Record instances and action appropriately on repetition	CEC	ONGOING
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Introduction and development of water harvesting</b>		
2.4.1	Design and implement a water harvesting system at Northfield Drive site	SITE COMMITTEE/CEC	DECEMBER 2017
2.4.2	Evaluate success of Northfield Drive pilot	FEDAGA/CEC	DECEMBER 2018
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Devolved management</b>		
2.5.1	Provide advice and support to allotment groups wishing to explore devolved management/independence from the Council	CEC	ONGOING

### Objective 3: Improve Customer Experience

No.	Action	By whom	When
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Development of website/social media</b>		
3.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compile new email allotment contact list</li><li>• Further Develop the City of Edinburgh Council website to facilitate on-line applications</li><li>• Add and regularly update</li><li>• videos/soundbites/training information</li><li>• advertise waiting list times</li></ul>	CEC/FEDAGA	ONGOING
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Initiate and develop a Mentoring Programme</b>		
3.2.1	Generic mentoring programme for existing plot holders	SITE COMMITTEE/PLOT HOLDERS	ONGOING
3.2.2	Roll out a training programme in partnership with the Saughton Park Restoration Team, to be based at the new Saughton demonstration garden	CEC	DECEMBER 2018

### Objective 4: Adoption of New Allotment Regulations

No.	Action	By whom	When
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Adoption of new allotment regulations by the Council and Scottish Government</b>		
4.1.1	Update new regulations to reflect changes within the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act	CEC	DECEMBER 2018
4.1.2	Consult with stakeholders on proposed amendments	CEC	JANUARY 2018
4.1.3	Committee approval of new regulations	CEC	DECEMBER 2018

## APPENDIX 1: Summary of potential funding and support organisations

Organisation	Contact details
Architecture & Design Scotland	<a href="http://www.ads.org.uk">http://www.ads.org.uk</a>
Allotment Regeneration Initiative	<a href="http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari">http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari</a>
Bridgend Allotments	<a href="http://www.bridgendallotment.org.uk">http://www.bridgendallotment.org.uk</a>
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	<a href="http://www.cosla.gov.uk">http://www.cosla.gov.uk</a>
Drylaw and Telford Community Gardens Project	<a href="http://www.drylawandtelfordcommunitygardens.org.uk">http://www.drylawandtelfordcommunitygardens.org.uk</a>
Edinburgh and Midlothian Beekeepers Association	<a href="http://www.edinburghbeekeepers.org.uk">http://www.edinburghbeekeepers.org.uk</a>
Edinburgh Community Backgreens Association	<a href="http://www.ecba.org.uk">http://www.ecba.org.uk</a>
Edinburgh Garden Share Scheme	<a href="http://www.careandrepair edinburgh.org.uk">http://www.careandrepair edinburgh.org.uk</a>
Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust	<a href="http://www.elgt.org.uk">http://www.elgt.org.uk</a>
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens	<a href="http://www.farmgarden.org.uk">http://www.farmgarden.org.uk</a>
Federation of Edinburgh and District Allotments and Gardens Associations	<a href="http://www.fedaga.org.uk">http://www.fedaga.org.uk</a>
Garden Organic and Henry Doubleday Research Organisation	<a href="http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk">http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk</a>
'Growing Plots', Royal Edinburgh Hospital	Email: <a href="mailto:royaledinburghcommunitygardens@cyrenians.org.uk">royaledinburghcommunitygardens@cyrenians.org.uk</a>
Landscape Institute	<a href="http://www.landscapeinstitute.org.uk/">www.landscapeinstitute.org.uk/</a>
Master Composter Project	<a href="http://www.Changeworks.org.uk">http://www.Changeworks.org.uk</a>
National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners	<a href="http://www.nsalg.org.uk">http://www.nsalg.org.uk</a>
Redbraes Community Garden	Email: <a href="mailto:redbraes@blueyonder.co.uk">redbraes@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
Soil Association Scotland	<a href="http://www.soilassociationscotland.org">http://www.soilassociationscotland.org</a>
Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society	<a href="http://www.sags.org.uk">http://www.sags.org.uk</a>
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy	<a href="http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk">http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk</a>
Scottish Government – National Food and Drink Policy for Scotland	<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/food-industry/national-strategy">http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/food-industry/national-strategy</a>
Scottish Natural Heritage	<a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/">http://www.snh.org.uk/</a>
Trellis (Horticultural therapy)	<a href="http://www.trellisscotland.org.uk">http://www.trellisscotland.org.uk</a>
Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society	<a href="http://www.rchs.co.uk">http://www.rchs.co.uk</a>
Royal Horticultural Society	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk">http://www.rhs.org.uk</a>
Waste Action Grants	Email: <a href="mailto:wasteaction@edinburgh.gov.uk">wasteaction@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>

## **APPENDIX 2: Current allotment regulations**

### Regulations made by the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh for the Regulation and management of Garden Allotment Ground in Edinburgh, provided by them under the Provisions of the Allotment (Scotland) Act 1892 (as amended)

- 1 Any allotment may be let to any member of the labouring population of the City of Edinburgh who shall make application for the same, and shall be approved of by the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh (hereinafter referred to as “the Corporation”).
- 2 The period of let of any allotment shall be from the date of entry to the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December following.
- 3 Any application for an allotment shall be made on a form to be supplied by the Corporation for that purpose.
- 4 The allotments shall be let to persons approved of by the Corporation according to priority of application, provided that the Corporation may from time to time renew the tenancy of any allotment to the person to whom the same has been let (hereinafter referred to as “the tenant”), notwithstanding there is another applicant for such allotment.
- 5 The yearly rent of such allotment shall be such sum as shall be from time to time fixed by the Corporation in terms of The Allotment (Scotland) Act 1892. The rent shall be paid to the Corporation three months prior to the termination of the let, and, in addition, the tenant of each allotment shall, on demand, pay to the Corporation the proportion allocated in respect of each allotment, of the occupier’s rates and taxes (including water rates) paid by the Corporation in respect of the allotments.
- 6 Each allotment shall consist of such area as the Corporation shall from time to time fix.
- 7 Every tenant shall keep his allotment in proper cultivation and keep in good repair the paths adjoining his allotment and further, shall use his best endeavours to protect the remaining allotments and the produce thereon.
- 8 No tenant shall cultivate his allotment wholly or partly for the purpose of the trade or business of market gardening.
- 9 No tenant shall cause, and every tenant shall endeavour to prevent, any nuisance or annoyance arising from burning rubbish, manuring his allotment, or any other operation thereon or in connection therewith.
- 10 No greenhouse or other building or fixture shall be erected or attached to any allotment, provided that any tenant may put down on his allotment garden frames and boxes for holding tools, etc., but such

frames and boxes shall not exceed 3 feet in height, *unless the plan and specification thereof have been previously approved of by the Garden Allotments Committee.*

- 11 No fitting, fixture or attachment of any kind shall be made to the fences or walls bounding the allotment ground, without the consent of the Corporation.
- 12 Every tenant shall be provided by the Corporation on his entry with a key for the gate giving access to the allotment ground, and any tenant losing his key shall report such loss to the Corporation forthwith, and may obtain another key from the Corporation on payment of sixpence.
- 13 Every tenant shall enter the allotment ground by the gate only, and on entering or leaving shall leave the gate securely locked.
- 14 No dogs or children shall be admitted to the allotments unless under proper control.
- 15 No work shall be done in the allotments on Sundays.
- 16 The Corporation or any tenant may terminate the tenancy of any allotment at the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December in any year by giving two months previous notice in writing of their or his intention so to terminate the tenancy.
- 17 On the termination of his tenancy of any allotment every tenant shall leave the same in a clean and orderly state, cleared of all vegetable and other roots and rubbish, and shall also remove all frames and boxes put thereon, in terms of Regulation 19, so that there shall be a clean face of soil left on such allotment, and in the event of any tenant failing to leave such allotment in such condition the Corporation shall be entitled to have such allotment put in a clean and orderly condition as aforesaid, and to remove such frames and boxes and to recover the expense of doing so from the tenant.
- 18 Every tenant shall, at the termination of his tenancy of any allotment, give up to the Corporation the key for the gate giving access to the allotments.
- 19 No tenant shall, in any circumstances, have any claim against the Corporation or the proprietor of the ground for compensation for disturbance or removal, or for unexhausted manorial or other improvements, or otherwise in connection with the termination of the tenancy of any allotment.
- 20 In the event of any question arising in regard to any of the matters specified in Regulations 7, 8, 9 and 17, the same shall be referred to the final decision of the Superintendent of Parks of the Corporation for the time being.
- 21 The Register of tenancies allotments kept, and the Annual Statements showing the receipts and expenditure in respect of allotments prepared by the Corporation in terms of section 14 of the Allotments (Scotland) Act 1892, may be examined by any ratepayer of the City of Edinburgh, without paying any fee,

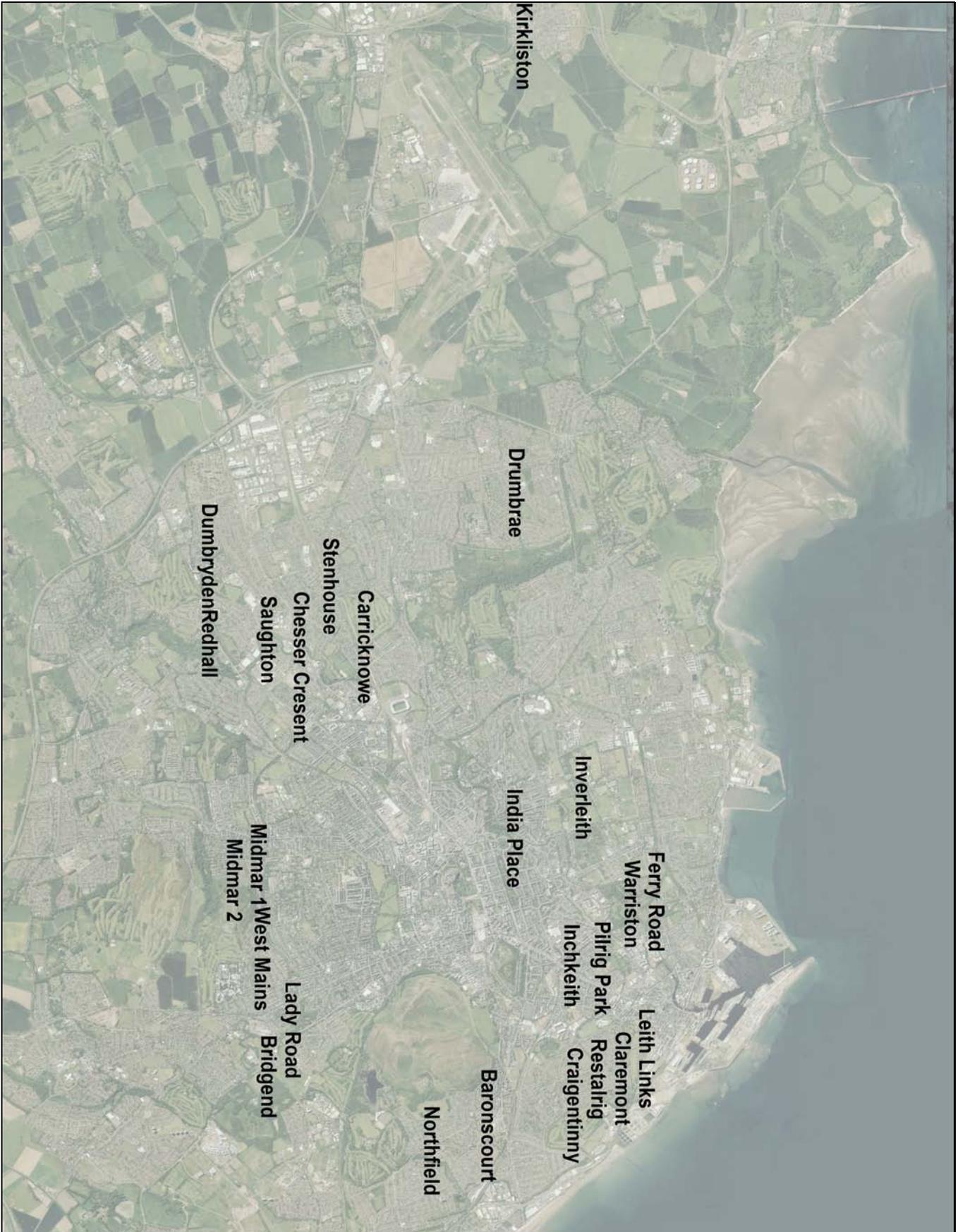
in the officer of the City Chamberlain of the City of Edinburgh, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, at any time during which such office is open for ordinary business, and any ratepayer of the City of Edinburgh may, without payment of any fee, make copies or extracts from such Register and Statements at any such time.

Confirmed by His Majesty's Secretary for Scotland, T. McKinnon Wood  
Scottish Office, Whitehall

22 May 1913

Amendment in italics in Regulation 10 confirmed 1 May 1924

**APPENDIX 3: Distribution of Council operated allotments**



## APPENDIX 4 Allotment Strategy Implementation Plan 2010 – 2015

Key: Blue - Ongoing Green- Achieved

No.	Action
1.1	Identify potential allotment sites through an audit of Housing Revenue Account land.
1.2	Carry out further community consultation for potential allotment sites to support the design process.
1.3	Allocate funding from the Council Capital Programme for new allotments from 2010/2011.
1.4	Explore all opportunities for external funding to aid the construction of new allotments.
1.5	Produce a template lease agreement for the use of Council owned land for allotments and/or food growing initiatives by a community organisation.
1.6	Support NHS Lothians in establishing community growing projects on NHS land by providing advice and promoting projects to those on the allotment waiting list.
1.7	The Council will support the use of vacant development sites as temporary allotments or food growing spaces by providing advice and promoting initiatives to those on the waiting list. On request the Allotment Service will administer any temporary allotment sites.
1.8	The Council will support private landowners to develop allotments or food growing spaces by providing advice and promoting initiatives to those on the waiting list. On request the Allotment Service will administer any privately owned allotment sites.
1.9	Promote the sharing and sub-division of plots when inviting those at the top of the waiting list to take up a plot.
2.1	Develop guidelines for community groups looking to use Council owned land for community gardens and other food growing initiatives.
2.2	Provide advice and support to groups looking to develop community gardens and other food growing initiatives.
2.3	Create a comprehensive list of the community groups and food growing initiatives in Edinburgh, and set up an information sharing network.
2.4	Promote new community gardens and other food growing initiatives to those on the allotment waiting list.
2.5	Support community groups and voluntary organisations undertaking food growing initiatives through the Neighbourhood Grant Programme.
3.1	Apply design standards to all new allotment sites.
3.2	Provision for the less able-bodied should be prioritised on the basis of demand.
3.3	All site associations will be supported in becoming fully constituted. A template constitution will be developed for site associations.
3.4	Hold annual networking event for Edinburgh's site associations and site representatives.
3.5	Set up an email group for allotment associations and site representatives to allow the dissemination of information on training, events and others.
3.6	Set up four mentoring schemes every year until 2015.
3.7	Establish an annual training programme for allotment holders.
3.8	Use monies from allotment rents to cover the cost of the training programme.
3.9	Undertake surveys of allotment users every five years.
4.1	Review and update the current allotment regulations, carry out consultation on the new regulations and seek ministerial approval.
5.1	Set up communal composting at all appropriate allotment sites.
5.2	Promote access to the compost generated through Edinburgh's green waste collections and the Master Composter Project.
5.3	Develop biodiversity action plans for allotment sites.
5.4	At new sites biodiversity will be encouraged as a fundamental objective, with native trees and

	shrubs used within the site and also planted around the edges.
5.5	Update the 'Gardening in harmony with nature' booklet, promoting locally important native species, local nurseries and organic methods.
6.1	Review membership of Allotments Strategy Steering Group and co-opt relevant representative organisations.
6.2	Host and attend the Scottish Allotment Officers' Forum.
7.1	Inform allotment holders of the rental increases.
7.2	Circulate information on funding opportunities to allotment committees.
7.3	Provide advice and support on funding applications.

Appendix 2 : Summary of Allotment Strategy Public Consultation  
Undertaken 05 Sep 2016 to 18 Oct 2016

1. Do you agree or disagree that objective 1 'ensure adequate provision of allotments' should be a core objective?

Options	Total	Percentage
Agree	359	98%
Disagree	5	1.5%
No Answer	2	0.5%

Comment box: 109 responses to this part of the question.

2. Do you agree or disagree that objective 2 'develop a robust management system for allotments' should be a core objective?

Options	Total	Percentage
Agree	337	92%
Disagree	20	6%
No Answer	9	2%

Comment box: 105 responses to this part of the question.

3. Do you agree or disagree that objective 3 'improve allotment customer experience' should be a core objective?

Options	Total	Percentage
Agree	304	83%
Disagree	53	15%
No Answer	9	2%

Comment box: 107 responses to this part of the question.

4. Do you agree or disagree that objective 4 'adoption of revised regulations' should be a core objective?

Options	Total	Percentage
Agree	281	77%
Disagree	42	11%
No Answer	43	12%

Comment box: 81 responses to this part of the question.

### Appendix 3: Summary of Allotment Strategy Public Consultation Comments

Comment	Response to comment	Occasions
Raise allotment standards and reduce vacant plot turnover times.	Improving allotment standards is a key aspect of the new strategy however; regular allotment turnover monitoring will be added as a reportable action.	46
Would like more information and an opportunity to comment on new allotment regulations.	A copy of original allotment regulations has been added to the strategy document and further consultation on new regulations will be undertaken after Scottish Government guidance has been concluded.	46
Pleased with the allotment strategy document and the current allotment service.	No response required, comment indicates a high degree of agreement with the strategy document.	42
More allotment sites are needed to address waiting list.	The focus of the strategy is on the provision of support to community groups interested in developing available land for food growing.	33
Training/mentoring on allotments would be useful.	A training and mentoring programme action is included within the strategy document.	30
Improve allotment communication between customers and Council.	Actions have been included with the strategy document to develop improved communication channels between the Council and customers.	22
Recognition that allotment gardening supports healthy	The strong health benefit of allotments is recognised throughout the strategy	20

living.	document.	
Concerns about allotment plot allocation method.	The allotment plot allocation methodology is designed to support community led allotment initiatives by offering a proportion of plots at newly developed sites to local people.	16
Council should continue with a supervisory role for all allotments.	The allotment supervisory role of the Council has been highlighted further within the strategy document.	15
Divide and/or share current allotment plots including small sizes.	The new strategy document recognises the need to match allotment size with customer demand.	12
Improving the allotment customer service is useful but not essential.	No response made but comment noted.	10
Improve the information provided on allotment waiting list.	Actions included in the strategy document to investigate on-line allotment application systems and to develop public reports which keep customers better informed on waiting list times.	10
Work with developers to create community growing spaces.	Action included within planning consent activities and detailed with the Open Space Strategy.	9
Do not lose parks and natural habitat areas to allotments.	The Council will continue to offer a range of activities within its parks that match local needs and that are developed further through consultation and engagement with stakeholders.	5

Improving allotment customer service is important.	Comment recognised within the strategy document.	4
Keep allotment rent rises low.	Allotment rent levels will continue to be included within the Council's wider budget consultation process.	4
Good security is an important aspect of allotments gardening.	Security remains a key aspect of managing allotment sites.	4
Training/mentoring for allotments is unnecessary.	No response made but comment noted.	4
Objection to the term 'customer' being used.	No response made but comment noted.	3
Provide toilets on allotment sites.	Site committees will be encouraged to engage in fund raising activities to develop their facilities.	3
Allotment application should be put online.	Opportunities for online allotment application will be investigated.	2
Allotment service should not be too heavily regulated.	New regulations will be developed in line with the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act, with further consultation being undertaken prior to adoption.	2
Concern about more responsibilities for allotment site representatives.	Further responsibilities for site reps will be through formal agreement.	1
Concerned about the cost of the consultation process.	Consultation cost was minimised by the use of email and internet surveying systems.	1
Limit the time individuals	No response made but	1

can have an allotment.	comment noted.	
Change the aspiration of objective 1 from adequate to a good provision of allotments.	Raising aspiration from adequate to good would be an improvement however resources make this unlikely to be attainable.	1
Request that Telferton Site be removed from the list of allotment sites.	Telferton Allotments was included in the Open Space Audit (2009). The Planning Appeal Decision Notice ref: Planning appeal reference: PPA-230-2186 recognised that this land is actively in use as allotment gardens. Therefore no change to its status with the strategy document.	1
Set a target to reducing the allotment waiting list.	Reduction in the allotment waiting lists will be lead by the success of community groups coming together to create new allotment sites.	1
Total comments		348