



# Newsletter

## July 2015: And The Heat Is On.



*Telferton says "hi".*

## Save Telferton Allotments



Telferton Allotments, near Portobello, are under threat - as reported in the Newsletter in January.

Rachel from Telferton takes up the story:

Telferton Allotments (officially known as "Craigentenny and Telferton" - but not to be confused with Craigentenny allotments nearby) are under threat from housing development. East Edinburgh already has several new housing sites approved. The area doesn't lack housing but it is desperately short of accessible public green space. These allotments are a valuable community asset and sit within an area of high housing density. In an area surrounded by busy roads the allotments help to reduce the local carbon footprint.

There have been allotments at Telferton for over 90 years. Throughout that time they have been worked and managed by generations of people from the surrounding area.

There are currently 85 plots that are valued by hundreds of local people. Allotmenters and their families take part in regular physical activity, have access to fresh fruit and vegetables and the benefits to mental well-being are widely recognised and documented.

These allotments add value to our quality of life. They provide social contact and a sense of belonging for retired and isolated people. Experienced gardeners share skills and knowledge that would otherwise be lost and families introduce their children to growing food and biodiversity in precious urban greenspace.

The site is protected as open space in the current City of Edinburgh Council Local Development Plan, and is designated as an allotment site in Edinburgh Council's allotment strategy, Cultivating Communities 2010-2015.



Previous attempts by the property developer to build on the site have been refused, once by the council in 1997 and again by an inquiry reporter appointed by the Scottish Office in 1999. He concluded the site provides the community with an opportunity to produce crops and the activity as a form of recreation is beneficial to all age groups.

Avant Homes/Gladedale approached the Council in 2013 to have the protected open space designation removed from the site to build flats and houses. This is clearly an attempt by the developer to persuade the Council to lose this valued and well used community asset.

The recent proposal includes a small site for allotments which would be gifted to the Council, although previous suggestions to sell the site to the Council were declined by the developers.

Plot holders and the local community support the site as allotments and will do everything they can to ensure it remains so in its entirety. There is a recognised lack of allotment space in Edinburgh and long waiting lists, which demonstrates the demand for such sites. Avant Homes' proposals would see the loss of approximately 70% of allotment space.



We recently carried out a survey to plot holders, here are some of the comments received:

“My wife and I are 80-plus and it is doubtful if we would retain our present physical health if we didn't have the incentive of the allotment as a regular challenge, both physical and mental.”

“Growing food with my son so that he understands how it is grown, benefits from organic produce and develops enthusiasm for healthy eating.”

“It's incredibly peaceful, and there is a wealth of wildlife on the site.”

“We live in the city centre with a shared drying green, which is concreted, and having the allotment as our own is a precious thing.”

“I feel it is incredibly important to safeguard this site as an invaluable asset to both the local community, the people who use the site and as a greenspace for Edinburgh as a whole.”

Please support us and help protect this valuable community asset by signing our online petition [here](#).

It is not a substitute for formal objections to the plans, as it only counts as one objection. However, it will enable us to provide evidence of widespread support for public green space and allotments.

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## The Scottish Rock Garden Club



Graham Gunn of Kevock Garden Plants in Lasswade writes:

The [Scottish Rock Garden Club](#) has been going for over 80 years and is full of amazing members who have an incredible knowledge of plants. I am organising a meeting in early September in Roslin with 3 talks, a walk and some food with the opportunity of people to join afterwards.

FEDAGA members may be interested. Some of the possible ideas that we may pursue include:

Hikes (possibly in Roslin Glen where we could look at wild flowers);

Talks (there are a lot of interesting existing talks as well as suggestions for new ones on a variety of subjects);

Practical (such as learning how to plant a rock garden or bulb scaling);

Visiting gardens and nurseries;

Food and drink and socialising events.

In the future we could also think about visiting Aberfeldy with Cluny Garden and John Mattingley (which has a wonderful wild orchid site nearby!) and Ian Young in Aberdeen who is a bulb specialist.

If you're interested please contact [Graham](#).