

Edinburgh – Kyoto Friendship Garden: Completion Report

Executive of the Council

20 May 2003

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform the Executive of the completion of the Edinburgh – Kyoto Friendship Garden at Lauriston Castle and of the financial out-turn of the project

2 Summary

- 2.1 This report summarises the background to the Garden project and its origins in the relationship between the City of Edinburgh and the Kyoto Prefecture, Japan.
- 2.2 It describes the design and construction process, indicates the reception given to the Garden by the public and specialists and details the project's funding arrangements.

3 Main report

The origins of the project

- 3.1 At its meeting on 6 June 2000, the Council Executive approved the establishment of a Japanese Garden in the grounds of Lauriston Castle, to mark the link between the City of Edinburgh and Kyoto Prefecture.
- 3.2 The roots of the project lie in the establishment of a friendship agreement between the former Lothian Regional Council and Kyoto Prefecture in November 1994. This friendship link was renewed by the City of Edinburgh Council in August 1997 following the reform of local government in 1996.
- 3.3 In 1994 a delegation from the Lothian Regional Council and Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Limited (LEEL – the precursor of SE:E&L) visited Kyoto and the proposal was made to create a Japanese Garden in Edinburgh as a permanent symbol of the friendship between the peoples of Edinburgh and Kyoto Prefecture. Both Kyoto Prefecture and LEEL agreed to make approximately equivalent financial contributions to the creation of the Garden.

- 3.4 LEEL commissioned a consultant to identify a number of potential sites for such a garden. The doyen of garden design in Kyoto, Toemon SANO, visited Edinburgh to view a short list of proposed sites for the Garden and the former kitchen garden at Lauriston Castle was selected. Mr Sano was especially impressed by the setting, with its substantial “borrowed landscape” – the view to the north across the Forth to Fife. Such ‘borrowed landscapes’ often form an important element in traditional Japanese garden design.
- 3.5 The City Council, supported by LEEL, commissioned a report on the gardens and related landscape at Lauriston Castle, to confirm that the creation of a Japanese Garden would be consistent with the nature of the site and its history.
- 3.6 Lauriston Castle already has an Italian Garden on its north-eastern flank, while the site of the proposed Japanese Garden lies to the west of the house. In the past, there had been a formal garden adjacent to the kitchen garden but there was no evidence that there had been any formal elements on the proposed site.

The Design of the Garden

- 3.7 After the selection of the site, LEEL commissioned a designer with experience of working in Japan to prepare an initial design. This was based around a large water feature and was costed at £650,000.
- 3.8 Following the report to the Council Executive in June 2000, further consideration was given to the details of the design. It was felt that the earlier water based proposal was not wholly suitable for the setting and would have been difficult to maintain to a sufficiently high standard.
- 3.9 It was also necessary to formally appoint a designer for the project through the Council’s procurement procedure. The specification was for a design that would be sensitive to the setting and simple to maintain in the long term. The original designer was invited to submit a new proposal and specialist advice was taken on other appropriate designers who should be invited to submit proposals.
- 3.10 After presentations and interviews, Takashi SAWANO of Japanese Floral and Garden Design, a London based, Japanese trained designer was appointed. It was felt that his design sat comfortably in the Scottish landscape and made good use of pre-existing features.
- 3.11 Kyoto is the centre of traditional Japanese garden design and the Kyoto Prefectural Landscape Gardening Co-operative Association (KPLGCA) were appointed to act on behalf of Kyoto Prefecture. As the final garden design had to be acceptable to the KPLGCA, Takashi SAWANO worked closely with senior representatives of KPLGCA to further develop his design during 2001.
- 3.12 The final design combined elements of a number of traditional Japanese garden styles, particularly the “stroll garden” and the “zen garden”. It also included a water feature, although on a much smaller scale than in the original design.
- 3.13 In spring 2001 a formal ground breaking ceremony was held at Lauriston Castle, in accordance with both Japanese and British customs. Senior representatives from Kyoto Prefecture visited Edinburgh at that time to mark the occasion.

The Funding of the Project

- 3.14 The report to the Council Executive on 6 June 2000 referred to the establishment of a Fundraising Trust and to the fact that the project would not proceed unless the fundraising total was achieved.
- 3.15 Kyoto Prefecture made a donation of £146,000 towards the cost of the Garden and SE:E&L contributed a further £150,000, of which approximately £35,000 was spent on design development and fundraising.
- 3.16 The Fundraising Trust raised a further £ 88,000, including £77,000 from the Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund (Expo Fund) and £10,000 from Japan 2001.
- 3.17 The estimated cost of the revised design was between £320,000 and £350,000, including the costs involved in consulting with garden design experts from the KPLGCA, two of whom spent three weeks in Edinburgh, positioning major rocks in the garden. This represented a reduction of some £300,000 on the estimated cost of the original design.

The Construction of the Garden

- 3.18 Following the completion of the agreed design in autumn 2001, a tendering process was held to appoint two contractors to carry out the engineering work and the landscaping/gardening. The tenders were returned as follows:
Engineering Works: £154,325
Landscaping Works: £103,832
- 3.19 The total tender figure was £258,157, which, together with the fees payable to the designer - £35,000, estimated costs of plant material - £10,000 and other fees and charges estimated at £40,000 came to a total of £343,157. This fell within the funding available and so the work was commissioned.
- 3.20 The three major funders had all set the condition that the project had to be completed by 31 March 2002 to qualify for funding and to fall within the 'Japan 2001 Festival', which ran from April 2001 to March 2002. This UK wide, year-long festival is held every 10 years to celebrate good relations between the UK and Japan, and Japan 2001 saw many Japanese events take place in Edinburgh. It was felt that the completion of the Japanese garden at Lauriston Castle would be the crowning event in Scotland. The completion date was one of the conditions set in the construction contracts.
- 3.21 The weather in January and February 2002 was exceptionally wet, and working conditions on site were very difficult. Large amounts of earth had to be moved to create the pool and stream and to build the symbolic mountain, all of which are focal points of the design.
- 3.22 Due to the adverse conditions, the project fell behind schedule in the early part of the construction phase and additional costs were incurred in premium payments for weekend working to bring the work back on track. Completion of the whole project was also delayed until after the original deadline date, which incurred yet further additional costs.

- 3.23 A particularly serious problem affected the construction of a summerhouse on the "mountain". The wet weather had made the ground unstable and the concrete platform slipped, making construction impossible and presenting a significant safety issue. The building had to be demolished, the concrete platform removed and a new design prepared and built.
- 3.24 Despite the difficulties caused by the weather, it was possible to organise a formal ceremony at the end of March to mark the completion of the construction phase of the Garden and to qualify for the receipt of funding from the Expo Fund and Kyoto Prefecture.
- 3.25 In addition to the development of the Garden, the opportunity was taken to repair a number of the paths outwith the garden area. This was a cost effective use of contractors already on site and minimised the disruption to Lauriston Castle grounds. The costs were not charged to the garden project.
- 3.26 The formal opening and naming ceremony of the Garden, attended by Governor Yamada of Kyoto Prefecture and the Lord Provost, took place on 9 August 2002.

Reactions to the Garden

- 3.27 During the period leading up to the decision by the Council Executive in June 2000, some concerns had been expressed by representatives of the Burma Star Association, who have a memorial cairn and commemorative trees in the grounds at Lauriston Castle. This sensitive issue caused anxiety in Kyoto. However, through consulting with representatives of the Burma Star Association at each stage of the process a change of view occurred and representatives from the Association attended both the Completion Ceremony and the Official Opening.
- 3.28 The garden formed part of the City's entry to "Beautiful Scotland in Bloom, 2002" and was awarded the David Welch Memorial Trophy for "Something Special".
- 3.29 The press reaction to the completed Japanese Garden has been resoundingly positive, with coverage in the specialist gardening press as well the newspapers. There has also been television coverage of the project at all stages of its construction.
- 3.30 It is anticipated that the programme of events planned for Lauriston will continue to attract positive publicity and encourage the public to visit both the Japanese Garden and Lauriston Castle. These will include a Children's Day in May and a 'Matsuri' (summer festival) in July and will aim to introduce the people of Edinburgh to many aspects of Japanese traditional culture.
- 3.31 Interpretation Panels are being prepared, to assist the public understanding of the concepts embodied in the garden. The cost of these (c.£4,000) will be met from the Culture and Leisure Department's Revenue Budget for 2003/04.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 In late 2001, when the decision was made to invite tenders, there was approximately £349,000 available to fund the project. The tenders and associated estimates totalled £343,157, and so the decision was taken to proceed.

- 4.2 The final cost of the project was £440,000. The overspend is largely the result of additional works made necessary by the extremely wet weather experienced in January and February 2002, combined with the requirement to have the project substantially completed by 31 March 2002.
- 4.3 The net additional cost of £91,000 has been met from cumulative underspends and efficiency savings from the Parks and Sports Division's Capital Programme. No capital projects have been cancelled or postponed as a result.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Edinburgh – Kyoto Friendship Garden at Lauriston Castle, known in Japanese as “Castle garden of water to beyond”, is a major achievement in garden construction – the largest project of its kind undertaken anywhere in the UK in recent years.
- 5.2 Kyoto Prefecture and their advisors, the Kyoto Prefectural Landscape Gardening Co-operative Association, are delighted with the outcome and recognise its long term value for good relations between the peoples of Japan and Scotland.

Recommendations

- 6.1 The Executive notes the report



HERBERT COUTTS
Director of Culture and Leisure

12:5:03

Appendices

Contact/tel	Derek Janes; 529 3951 Iain Park; 529 7915
Wards affected	Ward 5; Cramond and city wide
Background Papers	Documentation held at the Culture and Leisure Department, 23/25 Waterloo Place

Agenda item:

Report title: Edinburgh - Kyoto Friendship Garden: Completion Report

In accordance with the Council's constitutional arrangements, the contents of this report have been noted by the appropriate Executive Member.

Without prejudice to the integrity of the report, and the recommendations contained within it, the Executive Member expresses his/her own views as follows:

Signed:

Ricky Henderson

Date: *12 May 2003*

For information – Paragraph 8.2 of the Council's Constitutional Arrangements states:

“Officers will continue to prepare reports, with professional advice and recommendations, on matters requiring decisions by the Executive:

- a report seeking decisions on matters of corporate strategy, corporate policy and corporate projects will be submitted direct to the Executive
- a report seeking decisions on matters relating to the special responsibilities allocated to an individual member of the Executive will be submitted, in the first instance, to that member. The member will add his or her own recommendation to it before submission to the Executive. Where the Executive member disagrees with the advice and the recommendation of the officers, the Executive member will also state his or her reasons.”

From - “Capital City Government – The New Arrangements” (Appendix 2 – Constitutional Arrangements) – agreed at Full Council 18 May 2000.