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Returned by email.

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Dear Mr Wood

## **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINE – DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION**

Further to the above public consultation I am pleased to be able to make the following comments on behalf of Greener Leith.

### **Is the principle of developer contributions a good way of delivering public realm?**

Yes, in our opinion it is vital that the council has a clear and transparent mechanism of delivering private sector investment in the public realm, particularly with regards to larger developments.

For example, we note that there is a great deal of potential development in the area around Leith Links. Whilst the proximity to the park will prove a benefit to private property developers, we know that it is sorely in need of investment, as it is the worst quality 'Premiere' Park in the city, with the oldest play equipment of any of these parks.

In circumstances such as this we believe it is entirely legitimate to request a contribution towards an upgrade of the local green space, given that the extra new inhabitants of any development in the surrounding area are likely to benefit from it.

### **Should the area of contribution be limited to the Central Area?**

No, we strongly object to the principle of developer contributions being limited to the Central Area as we believe that every resident of Edinburgh deserves to enjoy a high quality public realm. Furthermore, public realm investment supports a range of public policy objectives. It should not simply be regarded as 'for the tourists'.

For example, our own community involvement research shows that one of the largest barriers to the uptake of active travel modes such as walking and cycling is the poor quality of the public realm in some areas and lack of cycling infrastructure. Developer contributions towards the public realm could help to address this issue.

According to the 2009 Edinburgh Neighbourhood Survey, we note that Leithers already perceive that their neighbourhood to be of a worse quality than the city-wide average on almost every score, including public realm indicators. The city-centre already receives extra investment in public realm through initiatives such as Essential Edinburgh. The city centre area is also already the focus of most of the public sector spend on public realm too. Limiting private sector contributions to the Central Area will only exacerbate the disparity between spend on public realm in the city centre and areas elsewhere in the city.

### **Is the level of contribution acceptable?**

Greener Leith would not wish to comment on the specific level of the proposed contribution, although we would wish that it is set a level that will actually generate a meaningful investment in public realm.

### **Additional Comment - Management of developer contributions**

In implementing these proposals we would wish that the council consider whether the private sector contributions towards public realm could be combined with other public realm capital funds 'devolved' to Neighbourhood Partnerships. In our opinion, we believe that this would allow for more local community involvement in the way that these funds are managed and deployed.

### **About Greener Leith**

Greener Leith is a charity, established in May 2006 and managed by local volunteers ever since. Our aim is to promote sustainable development, community involvement and better public spaces throughout Leith and North Edinburgh.

Greener Leith is currently delivering a number of grant funded projects that have an impact on the public realm, including the We Love Leith project that aims to promote green travel behaviour in the neighbourhood. We are also in the process of planning the Leith Childrens Orchard - that will see local school children plant more than 100 rare variety fruit trees on Leith Links this Spring. In addition, Greener Leith representatives sit on the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership Housing and Built Environment sub-committee.

Please see [www.greenerleith.org](http://www.greenerleith.org) for more information on Greener Leith.

Yours Sincerely,

Alastair Tibbitt  
Development Manager  
Greener Leith