

# Green Infrastructure

## Theme Area

Active and Safe Travel; Infrastructure Amenities

## Summary of Proposal

These proposals focus on improving the green infrastructure (excluding Pentland Hills National Park) for all members of the community of Balerno, including the green spaces themselves, the amenities that people can enjoy within the spaces (playparks, youth facilities, seating, bins) and the paths that people use within the village to access both these spaces and other parts of the village

## Local Context

Balerno is surrounded by a number of greenspaces and sits within 2 miles of the Pentland Hills Regional Park. It has two main planned recreational areas - Malleny Park (home to Currie Rugby Club and 3G pitch) and Marchbank Park (adjacent to Dean Park Primary School). A third site - locally referred to as "the Bing" was created on top of an old industrial site.

There are two playparks in the village - the largest is in Marchbank Park adjacent to Dean Park Primary School, with a smaller playpark created within the Kingfisher Park development off Somerville Road.

In addition to the main sites, Balerno is also home to Malleny Gardens, owned by the National Trust, which contains a walled garden of historical significance alongside a Georgian Manor House which is currently not open to the public.

Other greenspaces of significance in Balerno include the Ravelrig Walled garden, which was originally part of the grounds of Ravelrig House.

Community feedback indicates that people are keen for greenspaces to be protected maintained and enhanced, with improvements to the amenities that people can expect and experience within them. They would like to see key paths improved and safe walking and cycling routes established to allow them to access and enjoy these spaces.

*Balerno is surrounded by greenery but if you look closer there's a limited space where people can enjoy it. The paths are terrible, there's no lampposts if you want to know for a walk in winter months, there are not many benches when older and younger could*

*sit and chat. The only park is in Marchbank area which is not local for many. There is also a need for more local playparks for children.*

*Preserve the greenspaces at all costs ...they are what makes Balerno so wonderful*

## **Objectives**

- Encourage active travel by improving paths around the village
- Enhance existing recreational spaces
- Improve spaces designed for young people and teenagers
- Increase community use of spaces that are currently under-utilised.
- Improve the biodiversity of spaces

The local place plan supports:

### **1) Strong demand for protection of green space**

- Overwhelming opposition to building on green belt or existing green spaces
- Frequent phrases: *“no more building,” “protect at all costs,” “retain existing greenspace”*
- Concerns about overdevelopment, traffic, and strain on infrastructure

### **2) Paths, accessibility & connectivity**

- Need for:
  - Better walking/cycling routes (especially to Pentlands & reservoirs)
  - All-weather paths (less mud)
  - Improved disabled access
- Requests for safer, continuous routes between key areas

### **3) Play parks & youth facilities**

- Significant demand for:
  - More play parks
  - Upgraded/modernised equipment
  - Facilities for different age groups (toddlers → teens)
  - Inclusive/accessible play equipment

#### **4) More seating, bins, and small amenities**

- Requests for:
  - More benches and picnic areas
  - More bins (especially for dog waste)
  - Better placement of these amenities

#### **5) Tree planting & biodiversity**

- Strong support for:
  - More trees (in residential areas and parks)
  - Wildflower meadows / pollinator habitats
  - Rewilding and wildlife-friendly spaces

#### **6) Community-focused spaces**

- Interest in:
  - Community gardens / allotments
  - Shared outdoor spaces (BBQs, picnic areas)

### **Community Benefit**

Balerno is situated at the very edge of Edinburgh, surrounded by the greenbelt. Whilst technically urban, it has a rural vibe and feel that is valued by both the people who live within the village and those that visit it.

This proposal will benefit Balerno residents by:

Reducing the use of cars through better walking routes

Enhance and improve physical and mental well-being through better access to outdoor facilities and nature.

Improving health and wellbeing of children and young people through better access to play.

Improving community cohesion through shared community spaces

Improving environmental sustainability

## Balerno Local Place Plan – Green Infrastructure

### Draft Proposals

GreenInf1	Improve path between Ravelrig/Walled Garden and Bridge Road
Greeninf2	Extension of Water of Leith Path further upstream into the village
Greeninf3	Improvement of paths in woodland area between Harlaw Road and BHS and gate access to Malleny Estate and Gardens.
Greeninf4	Improvement of the Water of Leith Path
Greeninf5	Improvement of path by creation of a bridge in the shelterbelt by Cockburn Crescent by the bus shelter.
Greeninf6	Creation of safer cycle routes around Balerno High School
Greeninf7	Path improved between the park at the back of Malleny Avenue to Harlaw Road
Greeninf8	Clearer signage of paths around Marchbank Park/Dean Park Primary
Greeninf9	Additional benches in Main Street
Greeninf10	Additional benches in Marchbank Park
Greeninf11	Outdoor Gym Equipment in Marchbank Park
Greeninf12	Communal BBQ facility with picnic benches would be amazing, maybe in Marchbank park
Greeninf13	Planting fruit trees in the wee park ( and having a bench)between Deanpark Avenue and Deanpark Gardens would be nice.
Greeninf14	Existing patches of rough grassland or bland amenity grass turned into managed wildflower meadows / pollinator habitats
Greeninf15	Sheltered structure for parents and childcare workers to sit under. Communal park areas with picnic benches

	and tables.
Greeninf16	Develop the Ravelrig Walled Garden as a community garden
Greeninf17	Remove the concrete from the Roundabout at the foot of Johnsburn Road and add additional greenery
Greeninf18	Improvements to woodland corridors along Bavelaw Burn (Harlaw Road to Harlaw visitor centre) trees past their best/ many fallen down
Greeninf19	A proper shared park space to the north side of the village, the south side has Marchbank park. The north side has nothing, but the old Ravelrig estate has potential to provide space for dog walking, running or just relaxing in a park.
Greeninf20	More planters and hanging baskets in various locations around the village.
Greeninf21	Playpark at Deanpark Gardens
Greeninf22	Improvements to Play Park in Marchbank Park
Greeninf23	Play equipment for children 8+
Greeninf24	Skate park or Pump track
Greeninf25	New playpark or bike track on Harlaw Road Bing
Greeninf26	Playpark near the Rugby Club