



Free Comments from Questions in Consultation (2024/5)

Are there any other activities you think are important? (optional)

(56 out of 321 responded)

- Activities that support biodiversity E.g. planting and growing for birds and butterflies, bird watching etc.
- The safety of the canal - especially after dark.
- Conservation of wildlife and nature along the canal
- Explore ways to encourage local residents to keep their greenspaces free of litter rather than relying on the council to clear up after them
- Free parties for teenagers, damaged boat graffiti, green space/air quality
- Inclusivity of the disabled who can't walk any distance and need disabled parking to get access to basics. To recognise that cycling is great for those that can but not to put the cyclist front and centre, which in Edinburgh has actively excluded disabled and those with poor mobility from participating in communities. Many community orientated initiatives are isolating the disabled and those with chronic ill health. Please think if I could only walk 20 meters how would this work for me?
- Support for local food growing and pollinators and rain gardens, sustainable urban drainage
- I would like FCCT to push for a playground equipment (slides, climb frames) on the area of the new development. The new flats have them inside private zones which is not for community engagement. Having public ones will mitigate the effects of kids from new flats segregating from others.
- Bring community into the space and reduce crime along canal
- Reminding locals who has responsibility for what in terms of the canal and also in terms of local democracy. Encouraging local democratic activities.
- If pottery/ clay modelling workshops are offered, I would be keen to participate.
- Where can people access toilets
- I think you've covered it pretty well.
- Accessible and covid safe options (not just outside but with masks and tests provided and air purifiers on the boats)
- Regular Litter picking groups
- Supporting local sporting clubs - rowing, kayaking
- more info on the wildlife!!
- Gardening
- Canal walks and clean ups.
- I'd like to see regular art and creative opportunities
- more safe 'dry' events.
- Safe spaces with good lighting
- Involving local schools, colleges, universities.
- Things like seasonal gardening/clean up activities/things kids can get involved in. Join up with school / PTA
- Football

- Maybe connect with tourist buses, to bring folk to the canal? To have a coffee boat and maybe a toilet facility, to help make folks experience nicer?
- Permanent signage to walk on left of canal
- Facilities for using the water for leisure purposes e.g. boat/ kayak hire; easier access for canoes
- More community events! And history of the canal projects. Also, please ensure that the new developments have shops/cafes/services in them.
- Organising cycling trips along the canal for showing participants the local area
- Local jogging groups, children's activities (Summer Picnic), Boat Cafe, local children's nature club.
- Educating people on history of the canal
- Guided history of the canal and area tours, not many people knows their neighbourhood
- Have mentoring or couching amongst community members on selected topics.
- I think the ranking system above is broken it won't allow me to rank all items as it only allows one selection per column rather than rows
- Finding a way to reduce the amount of litter that gets thrown down on the ground or in the bushes
- specific events that bring the boating community together.
- Reading clubs, art clubs, etc.
- i think it is really important for local people to get involved and have a sense of belonging to their area. its also a good way to meet other like minded people and neighbours
- Activities for children and young people please.
- Anything that gets people out of their houses and outside. Especially kids!
- Involve people actively in the regeneration/improvement of the area e.g. painting murals. I think we should have more coffee vans and canal boat cafes.
- Educating children, youg ppl and all the community to be safe around the canal , and to support the biodiversity in the area.
- Sports
- Child/family friendly activities on the canal would be fantastic. Eg, kids' craft/music sessions on a boat, organised group kids' bike/scooter rides, maybe alongside one of the boats playing music? Remote control boating for kids in the basin? I write a weekly newsletter for kids' activities in Edinburgh and live locally so am always keen to hear about anything family friendly nearby. gaylesguide.com
- Promoting the canal and the fcct work through conventional and new media channels like the Edinburgh minute
- Regular garment mending skill share events
- Looking after and protecting nature
- Any activities that bring people together or get them outside, into the fresh air
- Pond dipping, encouraging people to do Duke of Edinburgh, use the canal path for cycling and walking. And running.
- Yes- positively reinforcing leisure walking by the canal. Ambling, dog walking, strolling with toddler(s), stopping to look at or feed the ducks, pausing to look at a passing boat - these have all become difficult or impossible due to the conversion of the towpath into a fast bicycle commuter route. And not only bicycles, but fast electric bikes, often with large trailers, and large cargo bikes, Despite the established hierarchy of users which places pedestrians at the top cyclists are roo often imperious, entitled and impatient, demanding passage and requiring that pedestrians get out their way. There is also potential for organised work parties to whitewash or otherwise cover up the appalling amount of spray painting on the canalside. No matter how "creative" the spray painter may think it is, repeated studies have shown that

pedestrians feel safer in areas with no spray paint. And we surely want to create a safe inclusive space on the canal, where all members of the community can feel safe and relaxed.

- Ensuring that the towpath is safe and can be used by cyclist and pedestrians alike.
- Helping connect the various communities and community groups serving the FCCT area of interest. e.g. Make Bruntsfield aware of what's going on around Shandon
- Time on the water
- Can't select all the options I want, but most are somewhat important
- None

What activities would you like to see in a canalside community space? – Other

- Men's shed
- Food and music pop-up
- Cameo cinema already exists and should be supported, not competed with. Similarly, there is a community larder at Shrub Co-op, not far away. I think your geographical location could provide a lovely 'hub' to bridge the gap between Fountainbridge, Tollcross and Bruntsfield, providing a happy, welcoming, sunny, light-filled comfortable space which everyone can feel comfortable in.
- activities for kids
- Public toilets
- I think the 3 options I haven't ticked would also be good but wouldn't personally use them
- Clothes swaps days, flea market, cooking together and sharing food
- A place or advertisement around community talks
- Tea/coffee facilities and comfortable chairs/tables. Community noticeboards
- Daytime activities for older/intergenerational groups, crafting/creative groups
- Children birthday parties
- Charity collection space to donate toys, clothes, etc.
- Community garden
- Children activities
- space for kids' play/music sessions or dance classes
- Cargo bike library
- Bike library pick-up point?
- Flea market

Do you have any other ideas or comments about the canalside units? (66 out of 321 responded)

- Running and cycling specific services?
- Potentially using the space for more greenery especially in the most built up areas
- Events for children to experience the canal safely
- definitely a new office - you deserve it you do a lot of good work here
- Could it be used for sports equipment hire / storage ?
- I'd love to see the brown space behind the print works become a market space (think Spitalfields in London). Would be a fantastic attraction for locals and visitors and could increase footfall to the area supporting businesses and filling the high number of hotel rooms nearby. It would be brilliant to bring a campaign around this to the council if planning has not already been settled for this area.

- On the back of the festive season, it would be nice to have locally organized festive events - Christmas, New Year, but also Bonfire Night and others.
- Space for local makers to have their products/pieces showcased and sold for free or at a low cost.
- There should be a community noticeboard in the space.
- A second-hand Clothes/toys library
- A crafting space
- it is important the community feel connected to them
- Use them for shops
- Shared workshop
- Baby group activities - the local NCT group had a canal boat trip during the summer that was oversubscribed! They used the church boat as the hire was free
- Social Dance classes
- Lots of flowers and plants please! To bring colour and joy to what is a very brick-heavy development. Perhaps the Trust could offer to maintain healthy planters for any commercial ventures not willing to make the effort. Packets of seeds for lovely colourful flowers are very cheap but can bring so much joy if well-maintained. And not just native plants (of which there are many on the canal already) but really colourful flowers (so long as they won't harm the wildlife). I think it would really draw people to the unit. Blossom trees would be lovely too.
- I like the idea of a pop up cafe/restaurant while cruising :)
- Edinburgh tool library hub here would be amazing
- These all sound good, and a good cafe pulls these all together.
- craft stalls for local artists/makers. Could collaborate with Edinburgh printmakers?
- Access to toilets for those who are visitors/don't live close
- Desperate need for toilets
- Scout Group equipment store
- Drop in activities for families
- I am happy to see it is working well and developing in new directions
- More food van pop ups next to the canal in summer
- Definitely a new office - you deserve it, you do a lot of good work here.
- I run element connection and mind embodiment spaces, always looking out for unusual venues to attract those who are new to wellness spaces, or just want something new to spark interest back.
- Theatre, live art, public art workshops
- Tranent used to have a space that community groups charities to use for a week to run a charity shop. It was a great way to raise funds.
- small bars for the summer and winter to make the space used socially
- Music gatherings
- Local Makers Market
- Run club
- Gain control of dogs, stop children smoking dope , put up walk on left signs permanently on the canal
- A space with nice outdoor seating would be a real asset
- These ideas are fantastic! More community events and a community hub that people can come together in.
- Very important to have tea/coffee available, lots of notice boards for community communication. A community hub open for all at any time would be exceptional. Please do

evening events, community members who work also want to be involved (some remote workers are especially lonely).

- Crucial to publicise well in surrounding areas
- Edinburgh festival popup venue or Napier student use
- Organising indoor plant maintenance sessions
- Organising wreath making/plant decoration sessions
- Having a book club once a month
- Maybe pop up classes such as Yoga, Pilates, Meditation.
- Could one of them be a little museum about history of the Canal? Would attract people from across the city and also anyone visiting the Falkirk Wheel might be interested.
- You could have small activities for children. And a cafe decorated with 'bargeware' items.
- Some integration with Gorgie City Farm.
- Don't know much about Canalside units
- Nighttime walks along the canal with or without dogs to make people feel safer.
- Well lit and secure
- Baby groups, Music lessons, a cafe/bar open in the evenings if possible!
- Should be welcoming atmosphere and comfortable for people to come in and see what is going on
- Walking Tour Groups along the Canal
- Meet up hub somewhere people can go for coffee etc and company
- A space for young people is particularly important.
- Bike maintenance workshop
- Would like them to be locally owned businesses/enterprises
- A stay and play Cafe
- I strongly believe all ground-level spaces in the newly built residential buildings should be non-residential - they should be for independent commercial & social use such as cafes, florists, bookshops, galleries, community organisations, gelaterias, wine bars, etc., but NOT large commercial chains (eg supermarkets, Costa, Starbucks, etc.).
- Development, within the units of a Fountainbridge Community Arts and Craft Gallery Space.
- To encourage and support the growth of community arts and crafts in Fountainbridge by the exhibition, display, exchange and sale, of locally created arts and crafts. The Gallery to be run on a non-profit making basis with support/ returns for local artists and an anticipated contribution to local charities. The Gallery would be both a local resource to the canalside creative community and a visitor attraction on the quayside. The Gallery/Art Wall would display works from local arts and craft group's with sales benefitting local charities (including the Trust) and the creators themselves. Providing a canvas" for local creativity and an interesting focus on the canal. The Gallery could be incorporated within and be an attractive backdrop for the Centre's other activities. It could be managed by both staff and volunteers.
- Yoga
- Would be lovely to have a bakery!
- I think a cafe ran for the benefit of the Community so maybe getting school children their barista qualification, and other people who require support to access employment and could be nice. Low cost, low thrills but a community space
- Having a community cinema on a boat night or student nights
- I think there is scope for boat hire
- Musicians and bands!!
- Canal bookstore or book exchange, canal clean up volunteering
- How big are they? Are they permanent for FCCT?

- Bike hire & workshops
- More food carts & drinks (hot chocolate, coffee). Seasonal events i.e. BBQ event in Summer.

How and where do you find out about local information and events?

Please note here if you have any comments or specific ideas or websites you use below

- The Edinburgh Minute
- I love Morningside FB Group
- Edinburgh news/ Live. The Meadows share (Facebook).
- Posting on r/Edinburgh subreddit with news of events and community updates (could share e-news letter if this exists). Substack
- Maintaining good links with other community groups to then share information about each other on other community group's websites and social media pages when needed, and vice versa.
- TikTok would help to amplify the reach of the canal
- Edinburgh Minute
- I'm not very good at gallons of information but I think it's really great the way the organisers run this work.
- Ask local community groups to spread the word (eg NCT)
- Posters and banners please! They are so much better at catching people's attention. If things are only online people never see them unless they already follow. Some of us choose not to be on social media for mental health issues so posters are vital. The Tollcross community noticeboard at the junction is very useful (how I found out about Canal Festival and lovely Flotilla). I'm sure local shops would gladly display things in their windows from time to time too (and that way, staff get to know about it too and can help spread the word).
- A single source of info available in different formats is easiest so not duplicated but people can access as most convenient to them.
- Bluesky looks to be replacing Twitter
- Edinburgh Reporter
- Gayle's Guide, Substack
- egg (Facebook group), Edinburgh evening news? I love Leith Facebook page.
- EGG Facebook; Edinburgh Under 5's; Gayles Guide.
- I mostly use Facebook and Eventbrite to find out about your events.
- Told at schools, nhs waiting rooms ect
- Maybe a regular podcast with a community focus?
- Email
- I think it's really great the organizers run this work
- Through community councils nearby
- Posters in the Park & School WhatsApp are my usual ways.
- Post events on to the Edinburgh Minute Substack, it's very well followed. I enjoy the email updates.
- Blue Sky is now much preferable to Twitter
- Banzai is a good forum and it's group chat in what's app is where I found this qnsire (53 members). A full list or directory of community groups in the area w contacts and functions would be great. Also a recycling guide esp for non council lift eg repairable electricsl, old phones etc
- At students accommodation as so many students housing around

- NA
- Email newsletters, Gayle's guide newsletter
- School What's App group
- Nextdoor
- Facebook and WhatsApp
- Shared to Facebook local groups, e.g. 'Watson Crescent neighbourhood'.
- Advertise any climate-related activity through the ECCAN Newsletter.
- A regular newsletter (twice a year?) would be good, circulated in the broader area. Community centres, libraries, coffee shops , etc. on both the work of the Trust and other interesting canalside events and matters.
- gaylesguide.com for family events. I am the writer and regularly include your activities where appropriate. The newsletter has over 3000 followers and is published weekly.
- the Edinburgh minute substack!!
- Bluesky
- I get a lot of my local news and info from the Edinburgh minute
- Mastodon is an excellent vehicle, and you won't see your posts sent to the bottom of the heap by the algorithm because there isn't any algorithm. And it can't be bought or sold by billionaires.
- BANZAI and another organisation have moved from Twitter to Bluesky.

We would welcome any other feedback in the box below.

Please also note if you would like to get involved in any of our activities, volunteering or have particular skills or area of interest or expertise you'd like to offer us.

50 responses

- Any information or opportunities to clean the canal water via volunteering would be welcome
- First I'd like to see what is on offer via the newsletter.
- Child care
- I would be interested in volunteering in future. I am a PR and communications experts, although do already have some volunteer commitments that would prevent me from offering a long term commitment.
- I'm an avid handy man and have very green fingers and would love to be involved a bit more in the developments of our beautiful community
- We love the canal and all the activities. Thank you!
- We already volunteer!
- Happy to spread the word of activities - I'm currently on a WhatsApp group of 80 parents from the local area, and have just started my second maternity leave so have some extra time (though will be with a baby)
- My partner and I are young professionals in the area of benefit of FCCT and we also run a local dance business focused on social dancing, and bringing people together to socialise while also undertaking a hands-on activity to boost their fitness, health and wellbeing. We would love to get involved in any way possible in the brilliant things you organise, as well as explore the space hire options you have :) We are looking forward to hearing from you!
- I'd love to be involved in litter-picking or graffiti removal around the canal.
- Boroughmuir kids could do the same (maybe they already do).
- Could some of the modern buildings around the basin install bird and/or bat nesting boxes on their roofs? Could bring some lovely wildlife to the basin area?

- Getting young people involved is key. It is an exciting and pivotal moment for the area. With the development going on, the area could become a vibrant, safe space for all, or go the way of a lot of canal areas and become a hotspot for crime and antisocial behaviour. Your involvement will be key in steering it toward the former.
- I think it's a wonderful community asset and am very happy to live in this area
- If pottery/ clay modelling workshops are offered, I would be keen to be involved.
- Concerned by the over use of cyclists on canal especially when walking with my daughter. They are too fast. Could a separate cycle lane be introduced? Forced to slow down? Dismount at bridges?
- It would be great to revitalise the Shandon Food Group or something similar. It was a fun part of the community. A regular market would be a great addition too, or another mini festival in the autumn at Harrison Park.
- I can support you with admin -social posts, newsletter, emails
- What are you doing about covid safety in the canal boats and outside events? Could you provide facemasks and tests? Or have air purifiers on the boats?
- Are all of your volunteers trained about disability and autism awareness? Can they all operate the ramp and stair lift?
- Could buffers be put in to make it harder for bikes, rollators, prams wheelchairs ect to roll into the canal? What is in place to stop disabled and specifically autistic kids and adults who are unaware of danger from falling into the canal? Especially as these demographics are less likely to be able to swim and drowning is the number 1 cause of death in autistic children?
- There wasn't a question on this but I just thought it would be beneficial to know that I came across the survey through a TikTok produced by yourselves ! :)
- Citadel Arts thoroughly enjoyed performing Tales from the Towpath on the Lochrin Belle and would love to return to the barge. We'd also like to offer one off workshops if there's an interest from the community.
- I would love to volunteer to assist with events
- I have accessed FCCT through working with Alzheimer Scotland, our people living with dementia have greatly benefitted from time spent with FCCT. The connection between people, nature and the local community is so important and FCCT are doing a fantastic job of facilitating this connection.
- I'm certified in guided meditation, Cacao spaces, firewalking, glasswalking, arrow breaking, board breaking, and rebar bending. Amongst others. I hold ecstatic dances, body connection spaces, and focus on being queer-inclusive (not exclusive). I have a personal mission of making these spaces as financially accessible as possible, so venue hire costs are something I need to consider but I'm sometimes hired to facilitate events for others and there's a larger budget for venues in those cases. I would be really interested to see if there's a way I can be of use, and frankly pretty surprised and disappointed in myself for not thinking to contact sooner!
- I would love to volunteer in any way
- I run regular art for anxiety workshops that use tried and tested techniques to help soothe anxiety/distract an anxious brain. I'd love to chat about whether this is a possibility to do with you
- it would be nice to have some more lighting along the canal - maybe some small fairy lights/string lights along sections which currently are poorly lit
- I had never been to the Flotilla of lights before but it was really enjoyable and reminded me what a fantastic natural leisure area we have in the canal and I plan to come back to the area soon
- Football

- For the greenspace group, I think it would be a nice idea to have another tree or plant quiz in spring 2025 for the local community to know more about the plant and tree species in Harrison Park.
- Can we hire paddle boards or rowing boats on the basin?
- I'm a published author and semi-professional artist and designer. I could possibly help on publications or promotion.
- Ensure commercial operations on the canal such as canal boat air b&b are prohibited.
- Thank you for all you do in growing our community. It is a really special place to live
- Maybe
- Could help depending on time availability
- Don't think enough people know about all that's available
- Why have you scheduled the canal festival to clash with LGBTQ+ Pride always the third Saturday in June? Please consider shifting this. Queer Pride is 3rd Sat in June worldwide to commemorate the Stonewall riots so it will not be changing to any other date. For this year at least try to do some kind of tie-in please...?
- I can give Pilates, workouts with body weights, Math sessions to the community members.
- I'd love to see some trad music sessions on the boats
- I'm one of the sewing volunteers at SHRUB Coop and would be happy to help your volunteers to learn how to run garment repair skill share sessions.
- Interested in volunteering. I work as a freelance editor and would be happy to do some proofreading or editing for you.
- Herbal medicine
- Keep up the great work, it's fantastic to see the community getting together to better our green spaces :)
- I have good boat handling skills and could occasionally help out
- Thanks for investing so much time and effort into our amazing canal and surrounding area, groups like this make the city so much better
- Festival of lights was amazing

Around 50% of people (162 people) were happy to keep sharing their views and filing in the following free text questions about the local area.

What do you most value about Fountainbridge and the surrounding areas?

Summary:

The Canal *52 mentions*

Accessibility / traffic free routes *52 mentions*

Local greenspaces *44 mentions*

Local Community *43 mentions*

Community Facilities (e.g. Library, shops, services) *36 mentions*

Local Wildlife and Nature *24 mentions*

Community Projects *13 mentions*

History and Heritage *9 mentions*

- Clean, green and safe space for all
- The green spaces are invaluable and enjoyable. It is quiet but I do wish it were more community centred

- Green traffic free access to city centre
- Pram friendly walks
- the canal! and the lovely greenspaces we have.
- Nice areas to go to with my daughter
- Greenspaces, community feeling especially in Shandon
- Opportunity to mix with others
- It's a safe space & green space for children, the community feel.
- Green space/natural space in inner city. A space FREE of cars.
- Restoration of the boat house on Harrison Park. Appreciating the efforts of volunteers with the Sunday Boat Hire.
- Community, parks
- Canal and Parks
- Canal and Harrison Park
- The park, canal and library.
- The green space, well maintained areas
- "The open green and blue spaces with proximity to shops, leisure activities and services. Great public transport links.
- A varied and friendly community "
- Union canal and nice walks along it
- Good local amenities, eg library, parks, shops. Friendly people
- I value the green spaces and how easy it is to get around without going on the road too much.
- It is a pleasant district to walk in and still feels like a community, in spite of the proliferation of short term holiday lets.
- You can travel places without walking on busy roads.
- The canal, green spaces, and the community
- Having so much green space available when we don't have our own garden.
- Green spaces and canal path
- The canalside location, the library, Sainsbury's. All these things are so close to each other and compliment each other to make the area a place to visit of a day.
- The Park and Canal (greenspace / trees) 100%
- Accessible, well-kept green space, canalside walk
- The people
- The canal and community involvement
- The canal and its history
- North Merchiston Club has been a lifesaver for my mental health and wellbeing (the soft play and Worthy Women group).
- The nature / quiet. Community spirit. Flat land for running and cycling.
- Green spaces, play parks, and the ability to walk by the canal
- Nice area to live
- The parks, the canal and feeling safe while using them
- The walks
- The canal, harrison park, craiglockhart forest. I love having road free areas to enjoy on my doorstep.
- The canal and the way it connects various communities to each other and the city centre while avoiding the busy roads.
- I am originally from the Grassmarket and have stayed locally since. I am passionate about keeping the area 'real' and pulling the community together.

- It's where I live
- This is a high value, high amenity area with a stable culturally-diverse population. It's the very model of the much-promoted twenty-minute-city.. With occasional trips outwith its boundaries(to Gorgie and Morningside) I can meet all my needs.
- Friendly people, small and community businesses, the beautiful canal with walkways and green space, our parks
- Sense of community, history
- There is still a sense of community, but it's grandually being swamped by the takeover of accommodation for tourists and students.
- The canal - such a hidden asset!
- Waterway with swans and other birds. Closeness to the city so cafes and shops nearby. Relatively safe because often busy with people.
- there is lots going on and it is all very easily accessible on foot or by bike
- The Green spaces, canal and Community feeling. Harrison Park and Craiglockhart Nature reserve.
- The green spaces, particularly the parks in spring and the canal with its varied wildlife and boats. There's always something to see that lifts the spirits. It's a friendly and supportive neighbourhood
- I like the idea of having green areas, such as Fountainbridge Green and Harrison Park, as it contributes to making life more natural and more positive for the local community. I am also very happy about the fact that the FCCT in the form of its greenspace group takes care of such green areas, maintains them and thus contributes to a green surrounding of the local community.
- Canal, shops, community
- Cleanliness
- The green route into town, birds and trees
- Wildlife and space to walk my dog
- Mix of people and easy access to canal and river
- An excellent area of development to support the local community
- "Very central for accessing greenspaces, shops, restaurants, etc.
- I like that there is a good population mix and there is still a community feel. I think we need to do more to protect our community, heritage and local involvement and a voice for what residents feel would benefit our area. "
- Diversity.
- Wild life, specifically swans
- St Michael's Parish Church and the all year round activities it provides for the community.
- Canal, towpath; parks; vibrancy & diversity (school, leisure park, offices, students, owner occupiers, private renters, council tenants, etc), facilities (library, leisure park, restaurants, shops)
- Having blue space is a large benifit in addition to greenspace in a city
- The lively area and then the canal with the walk into nature
- Sense of community
- "Access to the canal, particularly in spring/summer for birdwatching
- Fountainbridge Library - I practically live there!
- Good public transport links
- Tollcross Community Centre - groups, access to meeting rooms"
- The canal and surroundings, the chance to escape to somewhere peaceful.
- Green corridor

- I love living so close to the city centre yet so close to the canal. Hearing birds every morning and taking my dog for a walk along the canal is the best start to my day. I love the community.
- Green space
- The sense of community, and how easy it is to get outdoors for leisure
- transport, walkways the vibe
- Access to outdoor space
- Nature
- The canal.
- I appreciate the local amenities e.g. library, parks, canal and close proximity to centre of town whilst also being close to nature.
- Green and traffic free spaces + walkable activities for young children.
- Good sense of community and lovely green spaces
- I appreciate my daily walk to work along the canal, away from traffic and noise. I also use the canal for leisure walks, linking up to the Water of Leith or diverting to Craiglockhart Nature Reserve.
- I live in Watson crescent and find it to be a very friendly place to live, the people are mostly approachable and friendly there is the od noise from the pub at end of street but it's one or two nights a month u hear anything. I've lived here since 2019 and love the place I stay, from the local shops to the massive entertainment district as my 12 year old calls it (Fountain Park) lol.
- Community
- The leisure travel continuity offered by the canal towpath, avoiding road intersections.
- I enjoy walking around the canal, it's often quieter than even the streets nearby it.
- The canal nature and vibrancy of the community
- Quiet and relatively safe active travel corridor with the opportunity to spot wildlife on canal.
- Open skies, good community interactivity and local DIY groups
- It's a good option to access the centre via a green space instead of walking/cycling next to cars.
- The canal (and swans), the peace, and proximity to other areas that have cafes.
- Canal is beautiful and a piece of heritage.
- I like the relaxing view while taking walks alone or with my family, meeting people that live in the surrounding, taking a coffee and seat on benches
- Proximity to city centre, Haymarket, beside canal for walks into and out of town.
- Central, everything I need close together
- The canal is one of the best features, and the Dalry swimming pool, plus closeness to schools
- Amount of green spaces we benefit from, community feel
- Local shops, Harrison Park and canal
- The community and having a nice space and place to walk
- It's a neighbourhood that's very vivid, close to everything, very well connected, but at the same time it still feels like a cozy residential neighbourhood.
- canal side walking
- the boats! and the workers (brilliant people) and the boats
- Fountainbridge is lovely. I enjoy the walking groups
- walks canal
- Trees, birds, fish
- Bruntsfield high street
- The calmness it brings

- It's nice to have a space to enjoy nature with Harrison park just a short walk away and the canal to walk along. For my children growing up in a built up neighbourhood it's important for us to have that green space and water nearby just to connect with nature and have a safe space to play and feel calm.
- Interesting waterspace, heritage, good cycle and walking route into the city.
- It's good public transport connections, green spaces and restaurants
- Just moved in so unsure
- Central Location, Ease of access to shopping, leisure and green spaces.
- The Park and Canal
- Peacefulness, diverse areas to walk
- Historic Interest. Ideal for walking. Good Community and Local Business
- the canal and the beauty of it.
- The variety of services, shops, and leisure space.
- The green space and having a place to relax
- Amenities and local businesses
- Accessibility to restaurants, supermarkets, local businesses, public library. Also it is a convenient location to the areas of town I regularly go to (princes st, Morningside, Cowgate, uni of Edinburgh campus)
- The space offered by Harrison Park and the canal
- It's my home
- Being part of the walking group
- "The Canal and the lovely wildlife and peace it offers
- The PrintWorks
- The Cameo cinema and the Tollcross shops
- Walking distance to centre of town
- Architectural and historical details such as Meat Market entrance, info about old canal basin at Port Hamilton etc"
- Friendly atmosphere and cafes
- The towpath for walking & cycling
- Lovely area that has nice parks and green spaces, but also lots of city life places - cinema, cafes, pubs, shops and very convenient for public transport.
- Lovely area for walks
- The proximity to the centre / places of work. Amount of food places, local vibrant community.
- Natural habitat and doing walking alongside the canal side.
- The open area / landscaped area in front of the Boroughmuir High School is a place I enjoy for short walks / strolls during spring & summer.
- it's pretty and makes the local area aesthetic
- It's somewhere in the middle of the city that feels like you are properly outdoors and its away from roads and traffic.
- Diversity and Inclusion.
- Inclusion and learning
- The canal and foot walk path
- Bringing life back to an under used area
- trees birds fish nature
- Open space of historical interest.
- The access to green space and local amenities
- Walks and the Canal
- Fountainbridge is lovely. I enjoy within my walking groups.

- The boats! and the workers (brilliant people) and the boats.
- The people who live and work on and in the local area.
- Canal side walking
- The green spaces and the canal

How does living near or visiting the canal impact your wellbeing?

Summary number of mentions:

Walks / Being active 75

Positive effect 48

Nature / wildlife / greenspaces 35

Relaxing / Calming 28

Being near water 21

Community events and activities 10

Reduces stress 5

Negative comments (e.g. bikes make it stressful, youths or graffiti) 5

- It helps reduce stress and I look forward to coming here for walk and run
- The canal is one of the few things that motivates me to be active and get outside and I love the nature all around.
- Enables and encourages using bike or by foot travel rather than car
- It's more relaxing than on busy road
- being near water is so good for a short walk to get away from the the computer
- Positive
- Huge positive - on maternity leave so I've been along canal and round the park countless times! Love as a route to town with nature and peace.
- It's great for my wellbeing
- Being outside with nature.
- It is great for family or individual walks, feeding ducks and the buzz of people & activities.
- I'm from India, I like that the canal is well maintained.
- Well - use as travel route - alternative to road. Attend community events.
- Can't over emphasise the importance of the canal and the park to my wellbeing. Canal - particularly for myself. Park - particularly for my family.
- Relaxing
- Yes, Positive
- Love it
- I walk along there everyday.
- Very important, walking, time in the park for young children
- I love being near water and the wildlife there
- Very calming and so has a positive effect on mental health.
- Its nice to go for nice relaxing walks
- Enjoy walking and cycling along the canal regularly. Being beside water is calming and always nature to see which changes all the time
- It should be positively; I have been using the canal & towpath since I was at school. But nowadays I avoid the towpath as I don't like confrontation with cyclists and it is impossible to really relax with them whizzing past. On the water it is a different story. That is absolute bliss!
- It means I can walk to work almost without having to be on a road which is incredible.
- A lot!
- We spend a lot of time with our daughter at various spaces along the canal and enjoy being able to spend times with her easily outdoors.

- Yes
- Very positively, it's great being able to take a short walk and end up looking out at a view that can in parts look more like the countryside, and yet we're in a city. It can really refresh your mind.
- Overall it improves my sense of calm / wellbeing. Love the trees / park / canal for walks.
- Positively
- Positive mental health
- I walk along it almost every day - it makes me feel at peace and healthy.
- I like looking at water and boats
- Amazing location for walks along the canal but it's stressful with bikers whipping along.
- Huge impact. Jogging access to nature and peace and quiet.
- Water and open spaces and greenery makes me feel more connected to nature. It's calming.
- we use the towpath a lot plus SUP in summer
- Massively. Access to nature is a huge e.g. contributor to wellbeing
- I enjoy walking along the canal with my dog and having easy access to the city centre
- "I walk along the canal to get to work. It is car free and safe.
- I saw two kingfisher on the canal yesterday and I love seeing our heron. It's great to have nature within the urban environment."
- Great to get away from it all and up to eg Harrison Park
- I enjoy walking there a lot.
- Appreciate the canal as a traffic free route for cycling. Enjoy the views of the canal and the wildlife. Like canoeing sometimes
- The canal towpath is my principal route into the city centre. When working in the city I used it every day to-and-from work. Now, I may use it 2 or 3 times a week, sometimes more. It also connects me to the Water of Leith. The canal is part of my daily walking regime. I value this green connection.
- Lifts my mood when I walk across (often) or cycle-walk (less frequent).
- I like the varied environment
- I like to walk along the canal on evenings when the weather is good. I also like the wildlife on the canal - I've seen many interesting things.
- Love the water, walks along the Canal, and running the boat. all hugely helpful to relax after work. I suspect the canal is really helping my mental health
- A great place to have a peaceful walk and enjoy good weather. Exercise: running and walking.
- It means I can get out and about and meet people
- It helps my sense of well being and my mental health.
- Very positively. It's great to be able to walk into town almost exclusively along footpaths and see the changing seasons
- The canal plays an important role for my wellbeing as I use the towpath for activities, such as jogging, cycling and walking. I would also use the canal towpath to get to green areas, such as Fountainbridge Green and Harrison Park and to indulge into having a look at the plants and flowers there. Being part of the FCCT Greenspace group, I use the canal and make myself aware of the trees and plants growing around the canal.
- Positively, that there is such a space nearby which is accessible and enjoyable
- Relaxes me.
- Makes me grateful for my health of body and spirit
- I enjoy seeing wildlife in the city and there is always something interesting going on
- Helps to calm me provides a space for regular exercise

- Yes it does as use the towpath to travel to and from town and can appreciate its setting, nature and join the hub bub of canal life.
- "Access to greenspace/walks helps with mental wellbeing.
- Learning more about the flora and fauna has been hugely beneficial to wellbeing.
- Finding out about all the local groups who take care of different aspects of the area of interest has been fascinating, and makes you feel you are part of your community and have a voice."
- Living near the canal makes me feel connected with the rest of the city.
- Calm space.
- Walking by the canal keeps me healthy
- It helps my mental health by engaging with the friendly folks at St Michael's Parish Church
- Positively, particularly walking & cycling along the towpath. Not only because of the flora, fauna and wildlife but also because it is busy and used by many, on and off water.
- Positively
- I use it regularly for walks. It's nice to be near the water
- I visit the canal every day so a big part of my life
- It's nice to have a bit of the countryside in the middle of the city
- Regularly run or walk along the canal so great for physical and mental health
- Seeing the seasons change
- I love living near the canal and it is a lifeline for me living in such a bustling and busy city. A little bit of city peace.
- Great improvement
- Yes, I'm a lot healthier and happier for having such a good cycling route that's home to nature on my doorstep.
- knowing its there is very important to be near water
- Regularly run on the canal tow path for exercise
- Beautiful to look at
- I walk my dog at canal path everyday. This is defgood for both my physical and mental health
- I used to go for a walk along the canal regularly but now there are so many cyclists I very rarely do it as it's not a relaxing thing to do anymore.
- I like the blue and green space, seeing nature and wildlife as well as a break from cars.
- It makes me less stressed and allows me to take my child outside to a safe place without too much effort.
- It's hugely important to my mental and physical health. I regularly cycle and walk the canal.
- It is hugely positive having access to pleasant walks and wildlife so close to home.
- We take regular walks while we have down time at weekends with the kids. It's a beautiful walk and u can go for ages. There's play parks and stuff just off it and me and the missus use it for jogging during the week
- It's relaxing along the canal
- It makes me feel good.
- I have always found water soothing, and prior to living in Southside I've almost always lived close to the coast or a river.
- Nourishing walks along the canal
- The canal improves my wellbeing by making it easier to enjoy cycling and walking.
- Nature and people enjoying themselves
- It's brilliant, a thread of green that provides some peace away from the roads.
- We bought our flat purely because of the view on the canal, it impacts our wellbeing 100%. The peace it provides and being near nature is extremely important to our happiness.
- It is nice to have a place to walk by away from traffic.

- It was a major factor when choosing where to buy my flat
- It's a pleasant way to get into the city centre. It is a pleasant way to walk to the local leisure centre.
- Very positive
- It's nice to live near water, it's calming
- Love having the canal on my doorstep, and knowing there's events and other people in the area enjoying the canal brings a lovely sense of community which makes living in this area more enjoyable
- Both my home and office are very close to the canal, so that's where I go for my regular lunchtime walks, which I find incredibly important for both my mental and physical health.
- Attractive quiet space for walking
- Positively, nice to see lots of people out doing a range of activities and nice place to walk along or run
- It's one of my favourite things in the area, I always walk by the canal to de-compress and relieve any stress or so.
- walking, exercise and social conversation
- It's a huge benefit and pleasure to be associated
- Canal provides a beautiful walking area and increases my wellbeing
- keeps me fit
- water is something calming, being besides the water is important
- Don't like the graffiti and youths that hang around it
- It is an oasis of calm
- It has a calming effect and is good for the mind just to get away from the stresses of life and let the mind wander when walking, jogging or cycling along the canal.
- Excellent open space in the city for walking and cycling. Positive impact on city living.
- It's a pleasant place to walk and be in nature away from the city
- It's so nice to have a space to walk
- Always a nice walk
- Yes because we like to spend time in nature and near the canal
- Increases our headspace - calm and feel community
- "Walking with a Group.
- Encourages me to walk / exercise more
- Having local green spaces is helpful for my mental health."
- Makes me feel relaxed and at peace.
- It's great. It's a valuable green space with wildlife...can't really beat seeing that in your doorstep. Good for a walk, a seat in the sun, all sorts.
- It's a good place for a walk
- It makes me feel happier and less stressed
- Potential path for exercising and traveling
- When it becomes warmer I would love to go on more mental health walks and have social activities along the canal
- It's great, I take more walks as a result.
- Massively, my home life is totally based on the canal and the local community.
- It helps my wellbeing
- I walk by the canal very regularly. It's so lovely to be near water right in the middle of town. It's a peaceful haven away from the traffic and noise. It offers an oxygen boost and there is always something to see.
- Positively

- It's very lovely for walks and a pleasant green space/nature space for mental well being.
- Provides a nice place to walk, nice and calm.
- Positively - main route to rock climbing wall.
- I can do sport easily.
- Very much! I love walking beside the water, it brings me calm and relieves me after work
- Positively
- I don't live near the canal.
- I love running and walking along the canal for recreation.
- Being around water is great for mindfulness.
- Never been before until today but will definitely be back
- It helps my mental health as well as to de-stress
- The fresh air & space to walk by wildlife has a positive effect.
- Water is something calming, being beside water is important.
- Greatly - my toddler loves going to the canal to see the boats and the ducks, and I love doing the full water of leith walk
- Keeps me fit
- The Canal provides a beautiful walking area and increases my wellbeing.
- It's a huge benefit and pleasure to be associated.
- It's great to walk along the canal for stopping and seeing wildlife. The worst thing is cyclist not using their bells and going too fast.
- Walking, Exercise and social conversation is beneficial.
- Love the bird life on the canal.
- Very well

What things help you to feel connected to the community (e.g. people, activities or places)?

Summary mentions:

Local Activities and groups 62

Community Events 53

Friendly people / Chatting / Meeting others / Good Neighbours 50

Community spaces (usually outdoor) 23

Local walks / active travel routes / dog walks 20

Local shops and businesses 14

Knowing what is going on locally 9

Greenspaces feeling safe or accessible 6

Suggestions for improvements 5

- Open space and friendly people
- Social spaces events and casual spaces
- Events like canal fest where you can chat easily to local people
- Attending events
- meeting other people, events, knowing what is going on (even if i don't manage to attend lots of things), feeling comfortable accessing the greenspaces and knowing the walking routes
- Activities like the bat walk, canal festival.
- All of the above

- Activities and Events.
- People using the park, green space. The canal for walking along.
- Activities for people and children.
- Community events. Community spaces, Community groups - especially for families.
- Nice shops like Margiottas. Wonderful neighbours - we have a What's App group. Safe environment.
- Activities
- Community events for Kids
- Events
- The school
- Friends, activities, local families
- Living near a park and local shops means I see neighbours regularly. The canal and railway paths allow pleasant walks into town mostly away from traffic
- Events
- Church, library, neighbours, canalside trust activities, other local events
- Community activities
- familiar faces and event
- Events such as the flotilla of lightd
- Activities and Festivals etc
- Going to events that are put on especially e.g. canal day / festival.
- Activities near the canal
- Merchiston Community Council meetings, they're a great place to learn about what's going on in the area, and community events such as special celebrations, talks, or second-hand sales bring people together, too
- More events like this (Pumpkins in the Park) I can take my daughter to.
- Community events and activities
- getting to know local community & supporting local businesses
- Meet Up Groups, free activities if possible.
- Smiley faces, and talking to people.
- I have a young child, so activities the family can do together (like today's pumpkins!)
- 19th Pentland Scout Group
- Community events where several businesses are involved
- Better lighting along the canal at night to improve safety and to allow walks at night. More events to meet people
- Community events - canal festival, flotilla of lights, school fairs etc.
- Canal path, connections from canal to the crossing roads, Printmakers, pleasant greenspace up by Harrison Park
- Walking and visiting events.
- Events such as canal festival. Getting involved in activities though I'm very limited for time
- We know many of our neighbours and there is a general sense of neighbourliness and helpfulness in the area. Local shops are also key as is the diversity of them: grocers, hairdressers, beauty, florists, upholsterers and facilities such as cafes, art studio, estate agents and professional services.,
- Canal festival, communal activities, greeting each other, walking around
- Would like more going on for residents and fewer student flats built.
- Membership of local organisations, links with other groups, neighbours
- getting to know the boating community has made a big difference - I don't think the boaters and 'others' mix very well at the moment.

- I don't feel I'm connected to the community. Do I need to? I just live here. It's an area in a city. I'm not interested in strangers in this context, my community is my friends and work related things. A few events or newsletters don't make a community.
- getting to know people in my neighbourhood, attending events, helping to address issues like loneliness, climate and nature emergencies
- Working in Greenspace Group and Walking Group and taking part in activities and open days
- Joining the Greenspace group has been wonderful. There's the opportunity to enhance the area by planting seeds and bulbs, pruning and tidying hedges and planning projects with the support of the council. It is a great way to meet and work with other like minded people of all ages, having fun outdoors in all weathers. It's very satisfying to see the results of our endeavours and hear positive feedback from neighbours
- In my opinion, activities like one-off events, such as the Octoberfest or the Christmas Fair, contribute one part in making me feel connected to the community because as a FCCT volunteer, I am involved in representing an organisation of the local community. Through the activities of the FCCT, such as the greenspace group activities, I get to know a lot of lovely people and help them to do something for the community by maintaining flower beds, spreading seeds, inserting way marker stones for a path between the green spaces, etc. Most of all, such community activities as the ones of the greenspace group help me the strongest to feel connected to the community and that is why they need to be preserved.
- Walking cycling
- People and the activities.
- Meeting people on the canal side who smile, greet me or chat.
- Walking my dog and meeting other dog walkers
- Local cafes in dalry and fountainbridge library
- People who travel on the buses and walk around the area, Polwarth Church, the Pop Up Tuesday Cafe at Polwarth Church
- "I think I've answered that in the previous question!
- Being part of the FCCT has been the most significant factor.
- I have made connections with the most amazing people, who share the same passion for looking after our mature spaces"
- Talking to people about swans and how to keep wildlife and canal's water healthy
- St Michael's Parish Church and the welcoming community it provides. The canal festival, where we get to engage with other community groups in the area.
- Seeing people (particularly in groups) taking part in activities e.g. Canal boats, canoeing, cycling, playing in parks, Canal Festival, etc.
- Sense of community from activity and freedom of exploration.
- People smiling when you walk past, knowing what is going on in the area with all the new buildings
- Lots of lovely neighbours , activities at North Merchiston Club
- I'm on TX Community Council
- Meeting lots of the same dog walkers!
- Harrison park
- Events in Harrison Park.
- not sure, been hear 3 months (also 20 yrs ago) cafes shops, the book exchange box on Harrison Gardens - even though I don't use it I like to look at it and feel part of the community! (I am a lister of stories)
- Events, eg flotilla
- Talking to local people on my dog walks

- events, local services particularly the library, people, Harrison park, Dalry cemetery, the canal, chatting to business I frequent (the coffee cave man!)
- People I meet at toddler activities, Polwarth Church, North Merchiston Club, the park and playparks.
- People, activities, a sense of shared community
- Walking on the towpath with lots of others out also enjoying the area, festivals, other events
- The people are what make the community what it is. It's a mixed, accepting and caring community and a truly place to live
- Not a lot not enough information getting out to people
- Activities organised around the canal area.
- Providing my work, joining volunteer opportunities (I used to be a team leader for food waste collection, but don't have the regular time available now), attending creative events.
- Local events and festival celebrating cultural diversity of all sorts (ethnic and religious and other)
- Seeing familiar people on my cycle commutes, and leisure rides and walks.
- Familiar faces and friends, dance and group activities
- Volunteering - I volunteer with friends of Craiglockhart Nature Reserve
- Taking part in community events and activities is when I feel most connected to my community. I am able to see/engage with my neighbours and take part in a positive shared experiences, strengthening our bonds. At the events we are also able to take a minute to talk, we share knowledge and I often learn useful information about our local area, etc.
- school (Tollcross), events like canal festival and the flotilla of lights, Tollcross community centre.
- Coffee places, the events for kids, space for walks, running, fishing or ride a bike
- Being involved with EUCS.
- Library, canal events
- People and activities do - would be nice to have a local community centre with activities so that people in the area get to know each other.
- Activities, such as the lights festival in November, and seeing the community board and posters around the canal
- Events (loved the foraging workshops organised at North Merchiston Club towards the end of last year), connecting to people through local Facebook groups, local cafes and community spaces
- Friendly people and having events on
- Mostly the dancing activities I undertake, and of course the place and the people working in retail and hospitality in the area :)
- people and places
- activity groups - walking
- walks
- walking group - goes back a long time
- Places
- I don't feel connected yet but want to be
- "Open events - especially ones that are interesting for children too so that the whole family can go along
- Volunteering events that anyone can get involved in like doing something for nature or helping people, e.g. homeless, old or vulnerable people"
- Events, joint activities like the green group, places to see and visit along the canal.
- Events and workshops

- Workshops and events, particularly arts and crafts, but also food vans and such.
- Activities and places
- Events on the canal, Harrison Park and Merchiston Club
- "Interacting with Walking Group
- Community events e.g. Canal Festival + Flotilla of Lights
- Community FB groups e.g. Friends of Harrison Park, Shandon Shares"
- Events, small improvements by groups that care, like the Fountainbridge Green gardening
- Activities, music
- Sense of community and welcoming; open space; accessibility between the canal and other places of interest
- Activities and places where locals congregate and connect
- Activities and People
- People/neighbours. Shared spaces and work (I work locally as a handyman & plumber).
- Activities and people
- "Public events like the Canal Festival and Flotilla.
- Activities at the Barclay Church and St Michaels Church.
- Meadows Festival.
- Anything 'outdoors' (rather than online!)
- Well-advertised things!!
- Friendly shopkeepers and independent local businesses.
- Local history (the more people know about the local buildings and their stories/area the more they might delight in them and care for them)"
- Activities and Places
- It would be nice to have more community meetings or groups. I haven't yet integrated myself into the scene!
- Currently don't feel very connected hence participating in this to meet locals, hear about the kind of activities you run etc.
- Sports and recreation and volunteering.
- Activities help me to feel connected to the community.
- Canal festival.
- activities
- People and activities.
- People and activities.
- People, places.
- Nice people and good local fun area to visit.
- Central communication point
- The Walking Group, it goes back a long time.
- People and accessible groups and events
- Walks
- Activity groups & walking.
- Organising walking tours along the canal or using the boats for tours.
- People and Places
- All of the above

The Edinburgh Canal Festival has changed over the past few years to be a free community doors open day along a 1-mile stretch of canal. What do you think of this format? What do you like or

dislike about it? Do you think the Raft Race is still an important focal point? What other activities or venues would you like to see involved?

- Too new to the area to comment on this
- The raft race is not too important to me but it might be to others.
- Good to be spread out less crowded nearer to where I live
- Haven't attended
- love the spread out festival - so much more space and allows you to discover lots of different things.
- Never been but am interested
- LOVE the raft race! This year was good with more in the park.
- All good!
- Really enjoy it.
- We like it. We like that you can try the Raft Race free of charge.
- Good - good to be free to engage a wide audience. Raft race is a good idea - more info on how to participate and targeting local groups e.g. school might help increase participation. Also access to space and materials to build rafts locally.
- The raft race engaged me recently because my children's scouts were involved - so I'd encourage supporting local groups in raft building.
- Haven't seen the Raft Race
- Yes, onenteenny, scavenger hunts, sports day
- I've never attended the festival
- Not attended before
- I liked the format, especially the use of the parks, though there were pinch points at narrow stretches on the tow path where it became crowded. There was a good range of activities for all ages. I missed most of the raft race but what I saw didn't seem as much fun as in previous years. Whether it continues depends very much on the caliber of competitors.
- The raft race is nice and something to look forward every year, i would like more concerts organized in the area. Like local bands etc playing near the canal etc
- "Good to be along the bigger area, room for everything.
- Not sure if raft race got a bit squeezed out. "
- I love the raft race! I do think that things are quite spread out and perhaps it would be good for the festival to start earlier and finish later to give enough time to see everything.
- We have gone to the canal day for the past 10 years and really like how it has extended further along the canal than just being focused at the quay. I think involving as many businesses in the area is important to encourage and promote them to the local community.
- Like the raft race
- The newer format is so much better, it has made it all so much bigger and has connected even more people and organisations. I wouldn't say the raft race is THE focal point, but is a wonderful tradition that I would like to see continue. Having the high school join in this year was fantastic, not just filling a gap between the hubs of activity but becoming one of the busiest areas in and of itself. Bringing in more local bands and singers would also be great. I love looking back at the videos of the festival through the years, it would be good to have an official one done by organisers. Though it might be difficult, and you'd have to task someone with the job of doing this on the day, creating an official video of the festival by going to each event (and briefly interviewing those behind each stall/activity/organisation) would create a lovely, comprehensive list of all those participating and bring them all together as one community, which would be great to look back on.

- Collection of individual / independent businesses at stalls - selling and food/drinks.
- More Food
- Haven't attended yet as new to the canal area
- Really BIG signs with arrows saying 'this is open' would be helpful!
- Only just moved here.
- Difficult to know what is happening / where to go, but lots of amazing things.
- SUP race, but generally love the canal festival
- This is great. I would like to see more food places get involved so there's "more happening" during the festival
- "I've found it very busy and often don't make it as far as Lochrin basin and the rafting race although I always mean to.
- Some more small stalls and bands in either Harrison parks where there is a bit more space."
- I like it as it is.
- More things to interest children
- I like its community focus but I do miss the fun and chaos of the rat race
- Perhaps more could be made of Harrison Park for events. One thing that could be improved is the food offer. It was very disappointing in 2024.
- Never caught the race but love the festival...we ran a banzai stall this year which was very successful in recruiting new people to sign up to comms and as climate voters. And great to see and hear and support so many other groups and businesses
- Would love to see an open air swimming pool based on a barge at Lochrin basin - see the now closed Antwerp Bad Boot as an example!
- "I think free community festivals like this one and various others around the city do not get enough support from the council.
- The Raft Race is great fun, and should be more widely advertised. It gives people the chance to participate in the festival rather than just attend."
- I wonder if the canal boats could be made more of a feature for the festival somehow? (sorry, no clear ideas at the moment). Could be useful for boating community and others to meet together
- I'm not really aware of this open door thing.
- love the canal fest - the stalls, food, activities and info about local groups. I would like to see the raft race re-instated as a focal point
- The Format is good and encourages people from further away to experience canal and the area.
- It was a great success this year in the parks. There was a good selection of stalls and displays. I particularly enjoyed seeing the belly dancing and Art tent. The glorious weather really helped. It would have been very different had it rained heavily.
- "I like the idea of a free community doors open day for the festival. I believe that by asking for an entrance fee, this event would have significantly less visitors, so the free doors open day aspect should continue to be upheld. I also enjoy the format of the festival as it brings all the clubs and associations of the local community together for presenting themselves and organising activities which attract people. In the last Edinburgh Canal Festival, there was a large area in Lochrin Basin where visitors could watch a canoe polo match of a local water sports club. It is activities like this and the raft race which helps to attract visitors and these activities also show a piece of local life.
- Regarding the stands displayed at the festival, I would be interested in seeing a stand of the Bike Station in addition to BikeTrax at the festival. They are a bike store rather based in Gorgie,

but I can imagine that due to their very competent repair service, they are important for all the communities around. "

- I have not yet managed to attend but it sounds good
- I love this. It's a great idea.
- "Raft race is always popular but takes a lot of time to plan and build. Involve local schools
- In activities and competitions...canoes and boards."
- I like the raft race.
- I like the Canal Festival as it has developed over the years. Good to have more activities involving more people - little groups with stalls, or individuals with a message to give. Enjoy the raft race as do others.
- "I think the spread over the length of the canal is ideal, so that people who may happen to be out for a walk are more likely to notice and become involved.
- Food and drink outlets I think draw people in as this gives a more 'festival'" feel and people are likely to stay longer and become more interested and involved.
- Activities for kids always works well"
- More collaboration with community / youth groups to provide entertainment beyond retail.
- Involve local cafes etc
- Don't have an opinion about it
- Not sure
- Love it, and Raft Race definitely an important focal point. North Merchiston Club, local businesses, Boroughmuir HS
- "It's very good, using as much of the canal as possible for community activities.
- Raft race is good but could be better advertised and supported with community raft building days and storage so it's easier for more people to get involved."
- I like this format for the event
- "I like it, and the stalls are great. I'd keep the raft race - good fun! The only thing I don't like is the crowd, and it's kind of essential so I won't complain.
- Maybe encourage more other community groups in neighbouring areas, or even further afield to take part - and take part in theirs."
- Haven't managed to attend the festival yet.
- I love the events I just don't know when they're going on !
- Don't know
- I have been away for every festival since I moved here sadly.
- "no idea has I have not experience it - but love community food, entertainment etc
- Have been a few times. It would be interesting to have different activities per month and encourage more food and drink vendors.
- n/a
- I love it. Would perhaps like to see a wider carnival feel with more food and drink, and day long activities or events.
- I liked when there were more activities along the route, like painting and ducks.
- The festival is amazing my only worry is how close some of the kids get to the water to see some cones and tape along the route to stay behind would help greatly in my opinion, I have a company that would supply 100 cones free of charge of course
- I love the raft race
- I really like the event as it has been over the last few years. It seems so multi-cultural and vibrant

- I think there's a lot of promise within a free community format. It's important to make sure that it doesn't come at the expense of upkeep and living needs of course, otherwise it won't be sustainable in the long run, but markets and workshops can go a long way helping.
- Activities around celebration of diversity. The Library, the print makers and the local restaurants
- Interesting variety of activities and stalls, although the towpath does get very congested.
- Not sure
- I was not aware of the festival so cannot provide an opinion on what should/shouldn't be involved.
- "The raft race should be an all-at-once type of affair, with lots of home made rafts at a time and last not more than an hour. The way it is now has little visible competition, lasts too long and is a bit boring to watch - or maybe I was not there at the right time? Shorten the time. YES the raft race should be the main focal point of the day! It is a massive draw and what the festival is known for.
- The rest of the event is excellent. Though maybe do the polo a bit later in the day so more people can watch."
- 2024 raft race has been very different from the past. Past version was very funny and interesting. Kids really enjoyed it. It felt something engaged with community because people put effort in their own creations.
- A lovely event for my son and his class to meet outside the school and have a fantastic day outside
- I prefer the new stretched format. I used to find the concentration at EQ was a bit off putting on busy days. Putting a stage in Harrison Park would be a good way to spread the audience and to cement the stretched format.
- Like
- This is good. Would like to see more activities for children and aimed at children
- I haven't been before, just seen it taking place so I can't comment
- I have had limited experience of the canal festival, but I approve of the event
- This is an excellent initiative enabling interest people to experience all sorts of new apparatus and interests
- It is very good to have a free community doors open day
- Not been
- I've barely been aware of the festival (used to live near Bruntsfield Links)
- I like the format and think the Raft Race should still be an important focal point. It's always nice to see different cultures being embraced e.g. with food stalls from different nationalities that are represented in the community.
- Event is an excellent event, makes sense to extend it from Lochrin Basin to Harrison Park with activities along the way. Focal points at both Harrison Park and Lochrin Basin are good. Every effort should be made to encourage the local community to both use and appreciate the canal with attractive events . Free boat trips for children, music areas, and if possible the development of a flea market along the quayside?
- Unsure bc I just moved
- I wish it lasted for a few more days. I imagine something like Stockbridge's neighbourhood market could work in the summer.
- Thank you
- "Love that it is along the canal and the raft race is great to watch. Would like more stalls.
- More wildlife talks/events present "

- I really like the current format. I enjoy the raft race in general, really like the pre-music acts. Might be nice for more local music before and condense the race a little as it can be very long.
- its good.
- I think it's really good, enjoyed it the last few years. Raft race was well attended last year as I recall. The more stalls the better, last year was a good mix. Perhaps getting Napier University more involved as their student halls are right by the canal could open further options for facilities and space?
- Music
- Having it free is a good thing because it allows people from all backgrounds no matter their dealt to take part in community activities. I also do think the raft race is an important focal point and would be interested to see more expansion into water sports
- I have not attended the festival yet, but I love the idea of the fountainbridge and wider community coming together to celebrate the natural and local resources we have. A raft race is a good selling point
- Last year was the first year I lived here and could make it and i really enjoyed it. Missed the raft race but seems cool.
- Never been as new to the area. Love the idea of the Raft Race. The festival sounds important/good.
- The format is OK. Not seen the Raft Race
- "I only moved into the area recently so have only been to one Festival. I thought it was fantastic. I loved the water polo in the basin.
- What about having some horses/ponies one year, to reflect the role they played in canal life in days-gone-by? Kids would love to see and stroke them! Could even offer pony rides around Harrison Park or have a pony pulling a boat!
- What do you do if it rains? Could there be a back-up plan of having it around the basin with awnings and coverings if it does rain so it can still go ahead?
- I would love to know more about the history of the canal in days gone by (maybe a local amateur dramatics group would dress up/sing old Bargee songs etc?)
- It's such a great event. "
- Haven't been able to get there, because it's only one day & we missed it every year.
- I was not aware of the Canal Festival.
- I like the concept. Unfortunately missed it last year as was away.
- Group walking
- very good
- n/a
- I think it's a really good new format, and I liked moving along the canal.
- Music and Theatre
- It's great when the canal brings the community together.
- Yes
- Got it down to a fine art now! Set things out beautifully.
- Open doors is a valuable community event if it is well publicised it might attract different people.
- I like it, though it could definitely be better promoted
- It is very good to have a Free Community Doors Open Day.
- This is an excellent initiative enabling interested people to experience all sorts of new opportunities and interests.
- It would be nice to see a horse towing a canal boat along the canal path. Part of the history of the canal.

- I have had limited experience of the Canal Festival, but I approve of the event.
- I've never been before so can't comment on this

In your opinion, what are the main opportunities to develop a vibrant local community?

Summary mentions:

More or continued events and activities 53

More local businesses or things to attract visitors 19

Improved greenspaces 16

Better or more connections between groups 14

More community facilities 14

Wider variety of activities or groups 12

Better communication about local activities 11

Use of empty canalside spaces 5

Making things more accessible 4

Affordable Housing 4

Promote Shared use of towpath 3

- Small activity for family on weekends
- Events social spaces and gardening at times when most people are available
- Lots of different groups people could join that match their interests
- Kids activities
- making better use of the empty canalside units - providing services and activities that the community want to see.
- Getting kids involved, events at variety of times and levels of accessibility.
- Doing what you are doing!
- People involved, lots of ideas to develop or try new things, involving the community.
- We can walk along the canal with our children.
- Development of shed thing on other side of canal at Bridge 3 / West Harrison Park
- Engagement & frequency of events.
- More events like this one (Oktoberfest).
- A community picnic?
- More events to bring community together
- More spaces like the community garden at Harrison park and more opportunities to get involved with these
- Not sure
- Every opportunity for people to gather / share / have fun together.
- I think involving the community and residents in the use of the spaces available and continuing with the great events that get put on.
- More social areas to meet
- Link with other organisations that are doing good in the community to create a network and help each other facilitate even more projects and events that are fun, affordable, accessible and beneficial to the community. Also, good communications with residents, using various platforms to let people know that there is a sense of community here and that so many varied, fun activities are taking place all the time.
- Regular classes that people can join and forge community sense such as yoga / meditation as mentioned
- Inclusivity
- More events.

- Getting people together, making sure they ?? (team?) each other
- Would love wildlife/foraging/gardening activities that are suitable for your children.
- affordable homes, local schools, sport facilities, open spaces
- Continue to set up events. E.g. the Flotilla of Lights is really nice and really brought our neighbourhood together.
- Having a community space/hub on the canal. Having a well organised, decently-funded FCCT acting as a hub/umbrella for local communities and community groups. Improve greenspace provision at or near the canal basin end.
- There are groups associated with Harrison Park that could be involved. Additionally, there was an attempt in the Shandon colonies to set up an art/craft fair in 2024 which had partial success. It might be worth fostering a connection there.
- Friendly approaches, green spaces to sit and meet, small local cafe facilities, very few or no cars, sharing info about groups
- "Strong links with other local and neighbouring organisations, or those with similar aims.
- Activities ranging across demographics - age, culture, interests.
- Access to affordable venues for events or regular activities - community centres, churches & halls, libraries, schools."
- some good shops, businesses from boats (eg cafe on the water). Festival of Light is really important too. More pleasant green space
- local participation and making best use of amenities
- Outdoor Groups, Communication with folks from all walks of life in area, working with other like minded folks to plant things and tidy up litter and take an active interest in keeping our areas positive and cared for.
- The canal, parks and churches are ideal places to gather people together to follow shared interests
- I think it is important to offer one-off events, such as the Edinburgh Canal Festival, the Octoberfest and the Christmas Fair to present the community groups and activities to the public. Furthermore, having regular activities in place, such as boat trips, green space maintenance or bat walks, makes it possible for locals to integrate into the community. Consequently, they feel more a part of the community and contribute to develop the community. In terms of opportunities - as I mentioned on a question before - I believe that an organised cycling trip along the canal would contribute well to local community life. Likewise, a mindfulness walk along the canal might be another good opportunity to bring together locals.
- Not sure
- Again involving local schoolchildren and clubs in the area
- Fill the gap left by the farm. Involve the pre existing volunteer team. Work on citizen science projects similar to water of leith teams.
- People who are interested in their community and are able to contribute in some way - not just active volunteering but supporting local events, spreading the word about activities.
- "Promoting inclusiveness
- Education sessions/information re history of the area and what's happening now that people can access.
- I find with Greenspace group, it has worked wonderfully when we join with other community groups(eg Grove, Phoenix) to help each other or share skills. "
- Developing Fountainbridge and the Union Canal to a destination spot of Edinburgh. We benefit from good transport links and nearby short term accommodation that would be attractive to visitors to the city.

- Promote shared use of canal path. Cyclists can be aggressive towards pedestrians.
- I'm not sure I understand the question, but social media is a great way to connect and communicate with people
- Events that bring people together
- Active local interest groups such as FCCT, regular activities (runs, cycles, markets, more local shops), embracing/encouraging student involvement.
- Water based activities that aren't just being on a boat, so canoeing etc. Also having community activities to expand greenery. Next to the lift bridge the untarmacked area could be planted with grass
- Council needs to start approving new developments that are for homes for permanent residents, and stop flooding the area with hotels and student flats - and approving STLs. Every street that used to house permanent council tax paying residents in my area is now dominated by key safes. Transients don't build communities.
- Volunteering and events which are open to all
- To have more one off community events outdoors.
- A festival
- Regular events that are free or cheap and for a range of age groups.
- street BBQ! and games!!! do a local amazing race?!
- Shared interest groups accessible to all
- Trying to resolve problem of fast cycling versus walkers
- I think shared goals and activities, maybe involving local charities or activities
- To keep moving forward the way we are but without building any more student housing as we truly do have enough.
- Getting information out to people so they know what they can get involved
- Having a Centre where activities are held, and where events start and finish
- Inspiring excitement and connection
- Connect people through music, film, poetry, theater, photography, book festivals and smaller events . Celebrating links with communities of ethnic minorities (especially the biggest ethnic minorities like the Polish community or Asian communities) Events helping people connect and understand the different culture via eg music
- encouraging more people to enjoy time outside and interacting with one another.
- Support and encourage those who are brave enough to do things in the community, find a balance in who has power and avoid hierarchies, be consistent and regular with no pressure to commit
- Shared spaces like the one you are planning will be helpful. Knowledge of the history of the canal would also support a sense of pride in the area. Initiatives to take care of the canal are a good idea. Festival sounds lovely too.
- Many community events, lots of opportunities for community collaboration and communication, community organisations/clubs/activities. A central community hub that acts as the heart of the community, many cafes and spaces for creativity (please ensure the graffiti artists continue to have a place to practise their art, they bring vibrancy/youth and beauty to our space - it could be one of the biggest assets to fountainbridge and a tourist draw if given the chance), events or spaces that help develop community pride for its assets- history/buildings/nature.
- Engage with school, parent council and after-school club. People tend to feel engaged when the kids have things to do together. A playground, even a small one, would be amazing.
- Art exhibition or crafts. I would also see more schools be involved in cleaning the canal and surroundings

- Getting people involved.
- I think the area has too many hotels compared to family residences. The local shops are usually peak full of tourists and the local spaces are usually dirty from the inflow&outflow of tourists. The roads and streets do not take into account children's needs in terms of walking or cycling to the schools in the area. Children's clubs are usually held far away in high schools but there's nothing to host them nearby their schools. Families in the area struggle with how tourist-heavy and tourist-focused the area is, with the people visiting and transitioning being oblivious to the community and not mindful of the people living here.
- More spaces where local people can mingle, affordable venue hire for community events
- Pop up cafe with circle seating near to the children's play area.
- Having community events on that people are aware of
- all of the above!
- enjoyable sites and things to do
- more adversity somewhere
- Hot desking locations
- Getting children involved so they value the space and socialising with the community. Evening events to drive home the message that the area is safe at that time
- Having events that people can attend - free or for a small fee
- "A range of activities and events based on or near the quayside which enable residents, local people, and visitors to engage with the canal and the canalside both actively and passively.
- This already happens but the quayside itself could do with considerable improvement to make it much more interesting and attractive. It has the potential to be a key asset and attraction in Edinburgh , ie water of Leith, Portobello Prom.
- Activities to make it vibrant could include; Workspaces, Small business incubators, Attractive green spaces next to the water, Heritage visitor attractions, Arts and crafts / creative enterprises. Quality pubs and restaurants, Active waterway with boat trips, Exhibitions and events quayside. A quality built environment to live and work in."
- Events and volunteering
- I really wish there were more shopfronts in the canal, making the area a bit more of a promenade.
- Thank you
- Interactive events and talks
- Focus on local business and make craft fairs, food fairs, artists - opportunities for local musicians? Focus on climate change and environmental awareness.
- Bringing people together from different walks of life is a big opportunity with this type of organisation. Where possible, allow opportunities for people who are working during the day to get involved too.
- Music and days out
- Building large green spaces and improving lighting
- Make the canal a vital location for the community to interact with, travel on, and come together
- Mutual aid, interpersonal connection, local businesses growth, skill sharing, accessibility for underserved communities
- Anything that promotes well being through getting together and being outside.
- "Space for local groups to put on events. Music, food & Beer. (BBQ/Pizza Oven with musician and BYO).
- Shared spaces that people contribute to and develop especially growing plants and vegetables (edibles)."

- The People
- "1) Annual Events: visible events for which bring people outside and together physically, such as the Canal Festival and Flotilla, Meadows Festival too. These events cater for all ages and budgets which is ideal. They need to be well-advertised in advance.
- 2) Focal points where people can congregate (Canal basin!). These places must feel safe, welcoming, well-cared-for, warm and dry, colourful and 'for all'.
- 3) Places to be creative with others for the benefit of the community (art/craft projects which the whole community can participate in and which are displayed for all to see. Eg garlands which decorate lamp-posts or large Autumn leaves for shop windows. Can change each year!). Or a choir or orchestra which has a free outdoor concert. Or a bring-and-share breakfast etc).
- 4) Local newsletter or way of knowing what's happening. Colourful paper posters to advertise things.
- 5) Road closures and street parties!
- 6) Connection to local history (The more people understand their local architecture and landscape the more connected they might feel).
- 7) Ways to volunteer to improve the area (this can help people feel proud of their neighbourhood). Cleaning graffiti, planting bulbs etc
- 8) Places people can go without having to spend money (park, library, museum). Especially which are safe for little kids and elderly.
- 9) Ways for local businesses to contribute to making the area welcoming and interesting!
- 10) Working with existing groups to help promote each other's activities!"
- Commercial activities, clean & safe spaces, decent cafes & restaurants.
- Local spaces / cafes, little shops or markets and classes.
- Various events that allow people to meet.
- Activities which are regular. The ease / safety of the canal path.
- To do collective projects.
- community events
- more events and fun for all ages
- Group walks, litter picks, gardening.
- Raising awareness.
- More social activities, more coffee shops
- More advertising somewhere.
- Accessibility, access to space for a tea or coffee where people can stay and chat, great toilet and changing facilities, opportunities to connect over shared interests or passions
- Enjoyable sites and things to do.
- All of the above.
- For businesses to hire the Lochrin Belle for meetings going along the canal.
- Food market , canal boat cafes