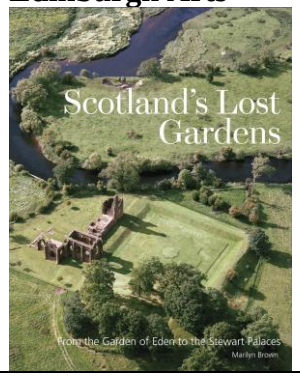
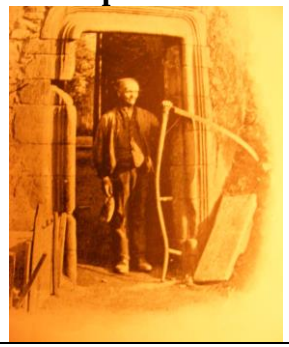
Friends of Granton Castle Walled Garden

Timeline of events in a community campaign to save Granton Castle's 'forgotten' Garden

Date	Event	What happened next...
January 2015	**A New Door for the New Year?**	- 'Note of Interest' sent to *Waterfront Edinburgh Limited* along with sketch plan for wheelchair accessible path leading to a new doorway to allow people to visit the hidden garden. - Group members contacted local councillors and our *MSP Malcolm Chisholm* seeking their help, in arranging a meeting and negotiating with council owned developers about the walled garden's future. - Proposal from Friends Group to restore Granton Castle Walled Garden and use it for sustainable horticulture progressed with advice from the *Community Land Advisory Service*.
February	**City Chambers visit & plea to planners!**	- *Historic Scotland* visit the walled garden & begin their review of its listing, taking into account all the references and plans collated by Friends Group members too. - Friends Group deputation went to the *City Chambers* & asked planners to safeguard the listed garden, given the new information and changes like the *Historic Environment (Scotland) Act*. Group members were heartened by the positive response from the *Planning Committee* and decision to bring the original 2003 housing plan back for review.
March	**Exhibition at North Edinburgh Arts** 	- Raising awareness of the garden's history on the Granton waterfront, who worked there, why it survived and the Friends Group campaign to save it from development. Many people saw the exhibition pictures and timeline of the walled garden's history in the arts centre cafe. A big thankyou to the staff at *North Edinburgh Arts* for helping us raise awareness and let people see what went on inside the secret garden & around it. - Fliers and cards using Ellie's logo. Hope these can help group members spread the word about the Friends Group & how to join in. - Documentary film short begun with a discussion. To allow people in the group to tell their story of involvement & explain why we are campaigning.
April	**Meeting the developers**	- Alternative areas of land to the walled garden were suggested by the *Waterfront Development Manager* for food growing; but on past land use research and viewing of pollution reports the group members decided these were not suitable for our aims. - Some discussion with *Mark Harris* & *Community Land Advisory Service* solicitor, as to the progress of Friends Group Ideas, longer term aspirations and group's organisational structure.

May	**City Chambers 2nd visit: deputation to the Local Development Plan...**	- *Historic Scotland's* review complete and their recommendation is to upgrade the listing of the walled garden! - *City Chambers* : our deputation request to have the newly B-listed Walled Garden protected in the *Local Development Plan* as a candidate Special Landscape Area in addition to being Openspace was heard. - Our group members had to thank the growing number of organisations for showing their support, giving advice and helping us to raise awareness of this historic garden's near miraculous survival. *Edinburgh College of Art*, *Pilton Community Health Project*, *Nourish*, *Edible Edinburgh*, *Common Weal*, *North Edinburgh Arts*, and most importantly *Royston-Wardieburn Community Centre* for allowing our Friends Group to meet monthly.
June	**Community Empowerment Bill & Scotland's Urban Past** 	- News and a great opportunity to really investigate the history of the walled garden offered, with a great presentation from Peigi Macillop of the *Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.* - Their interactive community based project, *Scotland's Urban Past*, could offer up-to five years of support and training: helping us involve local people in discovering & sharing the walled garden's story from the present day, through it's long history dating back to late-medieval period & the Stuart Kings. - *Community Empowerment Bill* News and unresolved Planning Issues mean that any final decision on the walled garden's future by the planners is likely to be delayed. The ability for local people to participate when decisions are made is limited at present.
August	**Friends Group Proposal goes to Developers!** 	- Following a constructive meeting in July with the Waterfront developers a number of urgent Friends Group committee meetings & site visits took place. We needed to iron out the details of an initial agreement for the Friends Group to take on the community restoration and horticultural use of the walled garden - 'Heads of Terms' outline proposal starting from Jan 2016 - presented to *Waterfront Edinburgh Limited* on our behalf by the *Community Land Advisory Service* solicitor for their August board meeting. - A new doorway to allow access to the garden for visits, surveys & community use for horticulture! Orchard restoration and a lot more.... - How could we raise funds? - Community Shares idea seemed popular with a lot of the members and supporters, so advice & presentation was arranged for our next Public Meeting planned for Sept.

Autumn	**Historic Research and a bit of Field Archaeology.** 	- Following on from our well attended September public meeting we welcomed the interest of *Historic Environment Scotland*, made a few plans and organised a cartography and field archaeology training day with three experienced support staff. - Fourteen intrepid volunteers and one dog joined in with the afternoon survey event organised through *Scotland's Urban Past*. A big thankyou to staff for their effort and patience in helping group members access the historic archive materials and images used on our website. - Filmmaking, surveying, honing our field archaeology skills and many more activities planned. All free for Friends Group members and supporters. - Sustainable beekeeping, a hive in the garden? - Planning dramas....to be continued after the New Year!
Nov 26th, 1st Friends Group AGM!		- Next meeting with Waterfront developers in December. - A show of support from local people will be needed if we are to stop developers from pushing through a twelve year old plan to build 17 luxury townhouses inside the last of Scotland's Lost Gardens. Details to follow soon..

- What next for the Friends of Granton Castle's 'forgotten' Garden?
- We now have rising community interest and possibilities of funding to get started on restoration of the garden. Community Benefit Society or SCIO in the future?
- Planning Issues surrounding land use in Edinburgh and taking part as a community group is a very complicated business. We have to say thankyou for the very recent help and advice from *Sustain*, *Planning Democracy*, *Planning Aid Scotland* and of course our own experienced group members with their energy and determination to keep going despite the obstacles.

A thought for the turn of the year, and looking forwards to what could be in 2016.
A 'Therapeutic Garden', what does this mean to you?