

## **Integrated Impact Assessment – Summary Report**

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Each of the numbered sections below must be completed  
Please state if the IIA is interim or final

### **1. Title of proposal**

Lot 4: Thriving Physical Activity and Greenspace

### **2. What will change as a result of this proposal?**

The Physical Activity and Greenspace Partnership consisting of Cyrenians, Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust, Edinburgh Leisure and SAMH offer a diverse range of one-to-one and group based physical activity and greenspace activities in both community and hospital settings. These services are delivering transformative outcomes for individuals, supporting the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP) in achieving its strategic goals for the people of Edinburgh, and were commissioned as Lot 4 of the Thrive Collective.

To help meet the EIJB savings target of £2.2 million through reduction in spend on block contracts and Service Level Agreements, it was originally proposed that the EIJB disinvests in three of the organisations involved in this partnership - Cyrenians, Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust, and SAMH Redhall Walled Garden. The Edinburgh Leisure contract for Healthy Active Minds delivery was proposed to be maintained, due to the robust evidence of the benefits of physical activity, and the fact that in contrast to the other 3 programmes, people who attend Healthy Active Minds transition to other forms of activity at the end of their programme, rather than remaining in the programme indefinitely. However this recommendation has been revisited based on advice received from legal and procurement colleagues that it is not legally compliant to retain only part of a Lot, as the remaining provider will not be able to deliver all of the original contractual outcomes

It is therefore proposed to allow all four contracts to expire on 30 November 2025 and that a recommissioning exercise should be completed thereafter. This exercise will specify the outcomes desired in terms of physical activity and will be co-produced with interested providers.

As the initial IIA (9 May 2025) did not cover the disinvestment of Edinburgh Leisure, a second was carried out (13 August 2025) to include the impact of disinvesting in Edinburgh Leisure on protected characteristics.

Lot 4 is currently commissioned as follows:

CT0562	SAMH	Therapeutic horticultural approach to supporting adults from across Edinburgh who are experiencing mental ill-health, including stress, depression or anxiety. Based at Redhall Walled Garden.	£30,420
CT0562	Edinburgh Cyrenians	Community garden at the REH for people experiencing mental or physical health problems and those impacted by poverty, isolation and homelessness.	£37,517
CT0562	Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust	Physical Activity and Greenspaces: access to outside activities, gardening, nature, woodland workshops, and social groups.	£81,119
CT0562	Edinburgh Leisure	12 week programme for physical activity for people with mental health conditions	£104,441

### **Overview of the services provided:**

#### Redhall Walled Garden (SAMH)

At Redhall Walled Garden people experiencing challenges with their mental health join our community of horticultural trainees and attend several instructor-led sessions per week in the garden. Many who come to Redhall have one or more mental health diagnosis as well as other socio-economic challenges including drug and alcohol use, poverty, neurodivergence, criminal justice involvement and caring responsibilities. At Redhall they are provided a community to belong to, skilled mental health support including safeguarding and adult protection input, peer support, employability support, physical activity, learning new skills, developing confidence and being proud that they have maintained and developed the public garden. Trainees at Redhall report the service as transforming their lives, preventing suicide, preventing repeated hospital admissions, improving their physical and mental health, helping them to return to education and employment. The EHSCP has two contracts with SAMH for the Redhall Walled Garden, of which the Lot 4 contract is the smaller element. The programme encourages participants to establish routine and get involved in regular physical activity in the garden to develop self-management and improve their health and wellbeing, whilst building social connections with others in a similar situation. The larger contract has been reviewed under Lot 3 and impacts of potential disinvestment have been captured in the Lot 3 IIA.

#### Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust

With support from Thrive Edinburgh, ELGT delivers physical activity and greenspace programmes to improve mental health and wellbeing across the city. Activities include conservation sessions, Branching Out woodland programmes, walking, and jogging groups, accessed through referrals from the Thrive Welcome Team and Thrive Collective partners. Sessions take place in local greenspaces, making them accessible and inclusive for people of all abilities.

These programmes help people build confidence, learn new skills, and connect with others in a relaxed, supportive environment. There is strong evidence that spending time in nature reduces stress, anxiety, and depression while improving mood and focus. Initiatives like Branching Out have shown positive outcomes for mental health recovery. National guidance, including Scotland's Mental Health Strategy and Five Ways to Wellbeing, recognises the importance of outdoor activity and social connection. ELGT's work plays a vital role in supporting healthier, more connected communities across Edinburgh.

#### Royal Edinburgh Hospital Community Garden

Our community gardens offer people the chance to meet others, learn about the environment, participate in therapeutic activities, work together, grow and eat local food, and most importantly enjoy time in a beautiful green space.

#### Edinburgh Leisure:

Edinburgh Leisure's Healthy Active Mind programme is a vital service harnessing the benefits of physical activity to support adults in Edinburgh aged 18 and over who experience mild to moderate depression, anxiety, stress or low mood. Since its inception in 2009, Health Active Minds has supported over 11,000 people becoming an integral part of Edinburgh's mental health support system.

In 2024-25, 1,392 adults from diverse backgrounds were supported to be active to improve and protect their mental health. The program includes:

- One-to-one support from a Wellbeing Instructor to explore individual needs, set goals, monitor progress and provide ongoing motivational support.
- A personalised physical activity plan offering options such as swimming, gym sessions, walking, fitness classes and yoga.
- Opportunities to join group activities alongside peers, including boxing, racquet sports, and group gym sessions.
- 12 weeks of free access to Edinburgh Leisure facilities, followed by an additional 12 weeks of subsidised access.
- Guidance and support to maintain an active lifestyle after completing the programme.

Monitoring and evaluation of Healthy Active Minds, shows that participants become more active, make fewer GP appointments, have better mental and physical health and improved quality of life.

### **3. Briefly describe public involvement in this proposal to date and planned**

Affected providers were notified that they were in scope in late March 2025. A more detailed communication was sent on 3 April outlining the specific proposed changes to their contracts or SLAs. Providers were then notified that the finalised proposals would be considered by the EIJB on their meeting of 26 August 2025.

No consultation with affected service users or members of the public has been completed by the EHSCP for this proposal. Providers have requested consultation throughout this process.

There is a petition opposing cuts to mental health services including the Thrive Collective which has exceeded 6,000 signatures. Link to this in the evidence table.

**4. Is the proposal considered strategic under the Fairer Scotland Duty?**

Yes

**5. Date of IIA**

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025

**6. Who was present at the IIA? Identify facilitator, lead officer, report writer and any employee representative present and main stakeholder (e.g. Council, NHS)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Date of IIA training</b>
<b>Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>		
Robert Smith	Strategy Manager, EHSCP	
Cat Young	Assistant Strategic Programme Manager (Thrive), EHSCP	
Charlie Cumming	Charlie Cumming, Chief Executive, Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust	
Oxana Macgregor Gunn	Assistant Director, Operations Scottish Action for Mental Health	
Claire Reynolds	Senior service manager, Scottish Action for Mental Health	
Claire Craig	Health and Wellbeing Manager, Edinburgh Leisure	
Helen Macfarlane	Director of Wellbeing, Edinburgh Leisure	
Lucy Gilroyd	Senior recovery services Manager, Cyrenians	
<b>Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b>		
Rhiannon Virgo	Programme Manager	February 2020
Holly Hart	PMO Officer	September 2024
Claire Craig	Health and Wellbeing Manager, Edinburgh Leisure	
Helen Macfarlane	Director of Wellbeing, Edinburgh Leisure	

## 7. Evidence available at the time of the IIA

Evidence	Available – detail source	Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal
<p><b>Thrive &amp; Lot 4 evidence</b></p>	<p>Thrive Collective Data 2024</p> <p><a href="#">Thrive Collective Impact Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Thrive Progress Report</a></p> <p>Thrive Welcome Teams Trak data</p> <p><a href="#">Redhall Walled Garden Impact Report</a></p> <p>Cyrenians Green Health Activity Pathways Report</p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Active Minds Impact Report &amp; Infographic</a></p>	<p>Data on service users from each service including demographics data and which interventions received.</p> <p>Data on Thrive Collective 2024 delivery, support 4,367 people, with a minimum social value of £7.13 for every pound spent on the Thrive Collective programme.</p> <p>This document sets out the aspirations of Thrive Edinburgh and what has been delivered against Thrive Pillars and Adult Health and Social Care Workstreams and Change Programmes in 2023.</p> <p>Referral and demographic data for MH single point of access (NHS access only)</p> <p>SAMH: Redhall Walled Garden Impact report from 2024, showing effectiveness and impact of service.</p> <p>Report from Cyrenians, showing effectiveness and impact of service.</p> <p>Healthy Active Minds 2024-25 Impact report demonstrates the effectiveness and impact of service .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,392 people supported</li> <li>• 70% participants report improved mental health</li> <li>• 94% are more active</li> <li>• 70% have improved physical health</li> <li>• 67% report improved quality of life</li> </ul>

<p>Public/patient/client experience information</p>	<p>HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland Thematic Review of Policing Mental Health in Scotland</p> <p><a href="#">Statement of support of Redhall Walled Garden by Trellis Scottish Horticultural Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Active Minds Impact Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Active Minds case studies</a></p> <p>Healthy Active Minds participant feedback</p> <p>Redhall Impact Report</p> <p>Cyrenians Case Studies: <a href="https://midspace.co.uk/green-social-">https://midspace.co.uk/green-social-</a></p>	<p>Assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of Police Scotland's provision of mental health-related policing services. Published its thematic review of policing Mental Health in Scotland.</p> <p>Statement positioning Redhall Walled Garden as regarded as a centre of excellence for mental health focused horticultural therapy</p> <p>Participants report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased levels of physical activity</li> <li>• Improved mental health</li> <li>• Improved quality of life</li> <li>• Reduction in GP appointments and medication</li> </ul> <p><i>"I can honestly say that Healthy Active Minds has been the most important factor in getting me through my mental health crisis. As my recovery continues, it's something that continues to be so important for structure and ongoing inspiration."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "My mental health has never been better than it is right now"</li> <li>• "Healthy Active Minds changed my life"</li> </ul> <p>Refer to report in first section of this table</p>
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<p>Data on populations in need</p>	<p><a href="#">Census Data (2022)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Population and demographics - Edinburgh Health &amp; Social Care Partnership (edinburghhsc.scot)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Supporting documents - Scottish Household Survey 2021 - telephone survey: key findings - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Creating Hope Together: Scotland's suicide strategy</a></p> <p><a href="#">CMO's Annual Report "Realistic Medicine: Critical Connections.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Edinburgh's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Scottish Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy</a></p>	<p>Provides current and projected data on the wider population in the City of Edinburgh</p> <p>Provides robust evidence on the composition, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of private households and individuals as well as evidence on the physical condition of Scotland's homes</p> <p>Scotland's 10-year suicide prevention strategy with a vision for partners to work together to prevent people attempting and completing suicide.</p> <p>Suggests what we can do to support healthy ageing and encourage greater upstream prevention; discusses how connection to nature can enhance both our own and our planet's well-being; and the importance of relational continuity.</p> <p>New Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Edinburgh (2024 – 2034). Physical activity, sport and all forms of movement are so important for our physical, mental, and social health and wellbeing, and by increasing our levels we will be collectively improving the health of our communities and Scotland's capital.</p>

	<p><a href="#">AUDIT Scotland Report on Adult Mental Health</a></p> <p><a href="#">Human Rights Bill: Consultation Summary</a></p>	<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 – 2025 which describes the approach the Scottish Government will undertake to improve mental health for everyone in Scotland.</p> <p>The report contains a number of recommendations for the Scottish Government, local authorities and partners, many of which reflect the themes set out in The Scottish Government Strategy.</p> <p>Summary of feedback from consultation for the Human Rights Bill</p>
Data on service uptake/access	<a href="#">iThrive</a>	Analytics report detailing usage of iThrive website 157,147 users, up 69%
Data on socio-economic disadvantage e.g. low income, low wealth, material deprivation, area deprivation.	<p><a href="#">Joint Strategic needs Assessment City of Edinburgh HSCP (2020)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Poverty commission reports</a></p> <p>Eurocare research - <a href="#">unpaid care has huge impact on mental health and affects low income households</a></p>	<p>Provides current and projected data on the demographics within Edinburgh</p> <p>End Poverty Edinburgh is a group of independent citizens aiming to raise awareness of poverty in Edinburgh, influence decision-making, and hold the city to account.</p> <p>Research found carers are disproportionately impacted by decline in mental and physical health due to their caring role – more than the general population – and it affects low income households. It impacts all age groups – young adult carers, mid-life carers and older carers.</p>

	Healthy Active Minds equality & diversity stats 2024-25	43% of participants were from SIMD areas 1 and 2, representing the most deprived communities.
Data on equality outcomes	<a href="#">JSNA-Health-Needs-of-Minority-Ethnic-Communities-Edinburgh-April-2018.pdf (edinburghhsc.scot)</a>  Gender inequalities in unpaid care work - <a href="#">Engender-response-to-the-Scottish-Governments-Scottish-Carers-Assistance-consultation.pdf</a>	Provides data on demographics of minority ethnic communities  Women are more likely to be unpaid carers, and this unequal distribution of unpaid care work has long-term impacts on women and girls/
Research/literature evidence	Benefits of physical activity: <a href="#">UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines</a>  <a href="#">physical-activity-and-sport-strategy-for-edinburgh-2024-to-2034</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For good physical and mental health, adults should aim to be physically active every day.</li> <li>• Adults who are physically active report <b>more positive mental</b> and physical <b>health</b></li> <li>• In addition to the health benefits, increasing physical activity across a population also has social, environmental and economic benefits for communities and wider society. <b><i>These come primarily from physical activities undertaken in a community setting.</i></b></li> <li>• Being active improves mood, promotes better sleep and plays a key role in prevention, early intervention, and the management of long-term conditions and non-communicable diseases.</li> </ul> <p>Staying active is crucial for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It is not just about physical health, but also mental health and social wellbeing.</p>

	<p><a href="#"><u>Getting the inactive active: Barriers to physical activity and their potential policy solutions   Scottish Parliament</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Public Health Scotland: Estimating the burden of disease attributable to physical inactivity in Scotland</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Cost-Benefits Analysis of Social &amp; Therapeutic Horticulture 2024</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Effect of exercise for depression: systematic review and network meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials   The BMJ</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis - ScienceDirect</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>A prospective study of existential issues in therapeutic horticulture for clinical depression</u></a></p>	<p>The cost of physical inactivity to the NHS in Scotland is estimated at more than £77 million per year, or around £14.60 per person living in the country</p> <p>An estimated 3,185 deaths and over eleven thousand (11,474) disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) are attributable to physical inactivity in Scotland. Efforts to reduce the disease burden of physical inactivity should focus on those who are least active.</p> <p>Trellis: The low cost and high impact of therapeutic gardening makes a strong case for sustainable investment in this sector. Add in the compelling additional return on investment that comes from sustainable, enduring health benefits, preventative effects, population health and environmental improvements, and the case for therapeutic gardening is robust indeed.</p> <p>Concluded that exercise is a proven effective treatment for depression, with walking or jogging, yoga, and strength training more effective than other exercises, particularly when intense.</p> <p>Robust evidence to show gardening activity improves physical, psychological, and social health, which can, from a long-term perspective, alleviate and prevent various health issues facing today's society. Highlighting role of parks and greenspace, and recommendation to policy makers to increase green activities.</p>
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	<p><a href="#">Equality-Mainstreaming-and-Outcomes-Report.docx</a></p> <p><a href="#">Community green: using local spaces to tackle inequality and improve health</a></p> <p><a href="#">Valuing the mental health benefits of woodlands</a></p> <p><a href="#">COSLA-PA-Contribution-Briefing-V8.pdf</a></p>	<p>Demonstrates horticultural therapy significantly improves depression and change is sustained.</p> <p>This study examines the impact of the quality of local green spaces on the health and wellbeing of people living in six deprived areas. It makes the connections between green space, ethnicity and inequality.</p> <p>This research is the first to value the mental health benefits associated with the UK's woodlands. It does this in terms of the costs avoided due to the reduced prevalence of mental illnesses. The annual mental health benefits associated with visits to the Scotland's woodlands are estimated to be £26 million (at 2020 prices). The reflatd value provide by FR for 2024 is £29.7 million. The values are based on evidence of the reduced incidence of depression and anxiety as a result of regular visits to nature.</p> <p>Public health Standards: standards Active Healthy Minds as part of Edinburgh Leisure uses this as a basis Sytem based approach and referral standards based on best practice. Evidence based for effective.</p> <p>This paper presents the positive contribution of physical activity and sport to Scotland, through a cross policy lens. Drawing on evidence to illustrate the direct and indirect benefits that contribute towards multiple outcomes and priorities simply by enabling people to be more physically active. This is relevant as this is directly impacted by the work of Edinburgh Leisure and other Lot 4 contracts.</p>
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<p>Evidence of inclusive engagement of people who use the service and involvement findings</p>	<p>Complaints/ compliments: 2024 Thrive Contracts review</p> <p><a href="#">Letter from Redhall Walled Garden Trainees (service users) in regard to impact of 24/25 funding reduction</a></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Active Minds case studies</a></p> <p>Healthy Active Minds participant feedback</p> <p>Healthy Active Minds Demographic Information</p>	<p>Redhall Walled Garden service user led letter stating impact of funding reduction in FY25.</p> <p><i>“I can honestly say that Healthy Active Minds has been the most important factor in getting me through my mental health crisis. As my recovery continues, it’s something that continues to be so important for structure and ongoing inspiration.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “My mental health has never been better than it is right now”</li> <li>• “Healthy Active Minds changed my life”</li> <li>• Average satisfaction score for Healthy Active Minds is 8/10 (47% of Healthy Active Minds participants reported a satisfaction score of 10/10)</li> <li>• Gender split: 56% female, 43% male (1% unknown)</li> <li>• 43% of participants live in the most deprived areas of Edinburgh (SIMD 1 &amp;2)</li> <li>• 29% of Healthy Active Minds participants report an ethnicity other than White British</li> </ul>
<p>Evidence of unmet need</p>	<p><a href="#">Edinburgh Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan (2019-2022)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Scottish mental health law review: our response</a></p> <p><a href="#">Patients Council Final PE report 2021</a></p>	<p>Details the health needs and priorities for the people of Edinburgh</p> <p>A response to the independent review of mental health, capacity and adult support and protection legislation,</p>

	<p><a href="#">Mental Health Welfare Commission - policy and research</a></p> <p>Healthy Active Minds referral trends</p>	<p>The Experience of Patients in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital – Mental Health Welfare Commission detailing feedback from people that use services</p> <p>Referrals and uptake to Healthy Active Minds grow year on year. Since 2022-23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we have seen a 5% increase in the number of referrals made to Healthy Active Minds</li> <li>• we have grown the number of people we support annually by 12.5%</li> <li>• we receive 120+ referrals a month to Healthy Active Minds with 200 people currently waiting to start Healthy Active Minds</li> </ul>
<p>Good practice guidelines</p>	<p><a href="#">Nice guidelines</a></p> <p><a href="#">Mental Health Foundation</a></p>	<p>This guideline covers how to improve services for people aged 14 and above who have been diagnosed as having coexisting severe mental illness and substance misuse. Consider incorporating activities in the care plan that can help to improve wellbeing and create a sense of belonging or purpose. For example, encourage sport or recreation activities, or attendance at community groups that support their physical health or social needs. It is recommended in these guidelines that physical activity is a key aspect and this is provided by the lot 4, in particular with reference to Edinburgh Leisure.</p> <p>Ensure activities take account of a range of different abilities. Consider, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the gym</li> <li>• education opportunities</li> <li>• volunteering</li> </ul> <p>Information for public and professionals alongside specific</p>

	<p><a href="#">Scotlands Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2023)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Physical activity for health: framework - gov.scot</a></p> <p><a href="#">Physical activity referral standards - Publications - Public Health Scotland</a></p>	<p>reports on how to support people with mental issues Each of our tips has been created to help us look after our mental health. Importantly, each one is backed up by evidence from research, including <b><u>the Mental Health Foundation’s ground-breaking study</u></b>. Tips include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get closer to nature</li> <li>• Keep moving</li> </ul> <p>Mental Health (care and treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003: Code of Practice</p> <p>A framework for action to improve levels of physical activity at both national and local level which is firmly founded on evidence-based international guidance. Scot.gov framework identifies what is needed to improve physical activity. They identified that health and social care is one of their priorities – Healthy Active Minds is a key example of this. Healthy Active Minds aligns with these standards, which are based on current evidence, and provide quality improvement guidance to inform the delivery of services.</p>
Carbon emissions generated/reduced data	N/A	
Environmental data	<p><a href="#">Improving access to greenspace: 2020 review</a></p> <p><a href="#">NatureScot Research Report 1361 - SPANS Scotland’s People and Nature Survey 2023/24 -</a></p>	<p>Local authorities play a vital role in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing new, good quality greenspace that is inclusive and equitable</li> <li>• improving, maintaining and protecting existing greenspace</li> </ul> <p>These findings emphasize the crucial role of local, accessible urban greenspaces in promoting health and well-being</p>

	<a href="#">outdoor recreation report   NatureScot</a>	
Risk from cumulative impacts	Closure of Redhall Walled Garden	<p>This proposal alongside proposal to disinvest from Thrive Lot 3 results in complete funding withdrawal from Redhall and subsequent closure.</p> <p>Risk that we are retaining staff from the iThrive team to refer people to services however, the number of services they can be referred to has and will be reduced.</p>
Other (please specify)		
Additional evidence required		

**8. In summary, what impacts were identified and which groups will they affect?**

<b>Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>The contract and SLA savings as a whole will help the EHSCP meet its statutory obligations by ensuring that resources can be prioritised to support the most vulnerable, by delivering efficiencies wherever possible. This will strengthen statutory services.</p> <p>The EIJB has delivered over £100m of savings over the last three years through a range of savings projects. There are few options remaining to deliver savings that do not impact on direct statutory service provision, and which would directly affect people who use our services, staff and providers. This proposal does not remove statutory services which form part of an individual's package of care. If this saving does not proceed, alternatives will have to be found with potentially greater impacts on people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The review of Physical Activity and Greenspace services has highlighted that people do not flow</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p><b>All</b></p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>through these services, but become long-term users. As these services are open-access, service users are not required to have an assessed need for this form of support. This creates an inequity whereby other forms of social care funded by EIJB are only accessible to people assessed by a social care professional as being at imminent risk of harm (i.e. critical or substantial need). The only exception to this is the 12 week programme of activity provided by Edinburgh Leisure. However, Edinburgh Leisure has now been included in the Lot 4 proposal due to contractual legalities.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to look at the types of services we provide, referral pathways, eligibility criteria and our key goals and outcomes to ensure that we can move people on to freely available alternatives, ensuring that provision is always targeted at the people who require the most help.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p>
<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p>Physical Activity and Green Space services have become critically embedded and relied upon within Edinburgh’s mental health support system. Removal of these community services will result in the following negative impacts to those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The majority of individuals accessing these services are aged 30 and over, but they support people from 18+ to 80+. These supports are vital in promoting the physical and mental wellbeing of older adults and those in midlife—many of whom face increased risks of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social isolation</li> <li>• Sedentary lifestyles</li> <li>• Reduced physical activity, which can worsen long-term conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and arthritis</li> </ul> <p>Originally commissioned in 2009 to provide access to non-pharmacological treatments for depression and anxiety, Healthy Active Minds is a citywide service that has supported over 11,000 people to date. It is embedded in Edinburgh’s mental health support system with 43% of referrals being made by GPs. The loss of the service is likely to increase GP appts,</p>	<p>Older people and People in middle years</p> <p>Older people and People in middle years</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>prescriptions, and reduce options for non-pharmacological treatments.</p> <p>By providing inclusive, welcoming environments that encourage movement, social connection, and engagement, these services help people remain active, connected, and well. Without them, many may disengage from community life, leading to poorer health outcomes and greater reliance on NHS and social care services.</p> <p>Older adults often encounter barriers to mainstream services, particularly when those services are not tailored to their needs. If these trauma-informed, community-based supports are decommissioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many will struggle to find alternatives that are accessible, appropriate, or welcoming</li> <li>• Social isolation may increase, contributing to both physical and mental health decline</li> <li>• The loss of familiar, trusted spaces may lead to reduced activity, worsening of long-term conditions, and withdrawal from community life</li> </ul> <p>These services provide more than support—they offer connection, routine, and purpose, which are essential for healthy ageing and quality of life.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> The recommissioning of Lots 3 and 4 will provide an opportunity to reshape and respecify the support we commission relating to physical activity for mental wellbeing. However, it is recognised that there is likely to be a gap in provision while this recommissioning exercise is completed.</p> <p>One of the most inspiring outcomes of these services is the way they empower people to create and sustain their own support networks. Walking groups are a prime example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many walking groups have become self-sustaining, led and maintained by the very people who attend them.</li> <li>• These groups foster connection, friendship, and trust, offering both physical activity and emotional support.</li> <li>• They reduce isolation, promote wellbeing, and build resilience within the community—all without ongoing reliance on statutory services.</li> </ul>	<p>Older people and People in middle years</p> <p>Older people and People in middle years</p> <p>Older people and People in middle years, staff</p> <p>Older people and People in middle years, staff</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>This is community empowerment in action. With minimal investment, these services create the conditions for people to support one another in meaningful, lasting ways.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> It is possible that many of these existing groups will continue to run independently even if funding is withdrawn, but are unlikely to support new members. An exception to this is groups which are led by staff, where participants are attending as a direct result of the motivational support that they are provided with and it would not be sufficient or a suitable mitigation for the activities to run independently.</p> <p>Impact will be on people who are waiting to be referred and waiting to start. Equally, people who are being supported when services are required to close may not be able to receive full support. For example, Healthy Active Minds participants are given 12-week direct service with ongoing support for up to 6 months. The result of which sees participants make long term lifestyle changes, without this support this outcome will be lost.</p> <p>If <i>Thrive Welcome Teams</i> are to continue and expand access to individuals over 65, a serious question arises: Where will they refer adults and older adults if community-based supports are disinvested or decommissioned? Thrive teams made over 500 referrals to Healthy Active Minds in 2024-25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older adults often require non-clinical, community-based support to maintain wellbeing, independence, and social connection.</li> <li>• Without these services, Thrive Welcome Teams will face significant limitations in their ability to offer meaningful, holistic support.</li> <li>• This creates a referral vacuum, where older people may be assessed but left with nowhere appropriate to go, increasing the risk of deterioration and crisis.</li> <li>• It should be made clear that all people who access these services will be impacted now and in the future. As well as highlighting the detrimental knock-on impact that this could have on families, people in receipt of care and workplaces.</li> </ul>	<p>Older people and People in middle years, staff</p> <p>Older people and People in middle years, staff</p> <p>Older people</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>This undermines the very purpose of early intervention and contradicts the preventative ethos of the Thrive model, the recent <a href="#">Chief Medical Officer annual report 2024 – 2025 (Realistic Medicine - Critical Connections)</a>, and <a href="#">Scottish Government Population Health Framework being developed</a></p> <p>Edinburgh Leisure works to enable people with mild to moderate mental health conditions and prevents them from getting worse as well as manage long term.</p> <p>These services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to people of all ages, including younger individuals who attend with a trusted adult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This inclusive approach allows intergenerational support, helping younger people benefit from safe, supportive environments even if they are not the primary service user.</li> <li>• It fosters early engagement, helping to build trust in mental health and wellbeing services from a young age.</li> <li>• It also supports family and community cohesion, allowing parents, carers, or guardians to access help without needing to arrange separate childcare.</li> </ul> <p>This flexibility is a key strength of the model—removing these services would eliminate one of the few accessible, stigma-free spaces for younger people to begin engaging with support.</p> <p>The decommissioning of these services will have a direct impact on referral pathways from other essential services, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), which currently refer young people to the community garden as a therapeutic, non-clinical space for recovery and connection.</li> <li>• Family mediation services, which rely on these community-based supports to provide holistic, wraparound care for families in distress. Without these services:</li> <li>• CAMHS will lose a valuable, low-stigma referral option that supports young people in a safe, natural environment.</li> </ul>	<p>All</p> <p>All, including younger people</p> <p>Young people, families</p> <p>Young People</p> <p>Young People, families</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families will have fewer options for early intervention, increasing the likelihood of conflict escalation and statutory involvement.</li> <li>Edinburgh Leisure also advised that they may need to begin closing access to services ahead of the end of the contract, to allow time for people to move through the service and not be cut off halfway through their process. So, this could impact more people than initially identified.</li> </ul> <p>This is not just a loss of services—it’s a breakdown in the collaborative ecosystem that supports mental health and family wellbeing across Edinburgh.</p> <p>The potential closure of Redhall Walled Garden would have far-reaching consequences for individuals, families, and the wider community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A nursery located onsite would be lost, disrupting early years education and care for local families.</li> <li>Teenagers who currently use the garden for productive, meaningful activities would lose a safe, structured environment that supports their development and wellbeing.</li> <li>Families who regularly visit the garden and surrounding greenspace would lose access to a cherished, calming environment that promotes connection with nature, relaxation, and community bonding.</li> </ul> <p>This is more than a garden—it is a living, breathing community hub that supports people of all ages. Its closure would represent a loss of opportunity, wellbeing, and belonging for many.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Children’s services are not a delegated function of the EIJB and may be commissioned more appropriately by Communities and Families.</p> <p>The services mostly demonstrate an even split in uptake between men and women, which is particularly significant given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men are statistically less likely to seek help for mental health issues due to stigma, cultural expectations, and fear of judgment.</li> </ul>	<p>Families</p> <p>Children and young people, families</p> <p>Men</p>



Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally sensitive and inclusive practices that welcome people from all communities</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the services offer enhanced mental health support, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to trauma-informed staff</li> <li>• On-site mental health practitioners or strong referral pathways</li> <li>• A focus on early intervention and emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• Edinburgh Leisure have a small percentage of trans people on the service who benefit from the tailored service.</li> </ul> <p>This combination of accessibility and integrated support ensures that <b>no one is left behind</b>, and that people can receive the help they need in a space that respects their dignity and individuality.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> The EHSCP continues to commission many spaces to help and welcome people with mental health issues appropriately. For example, the main contract for Redhall Walled Garden has been considered separately and is subject to a different recommendation.</p> <p>These services are intentionally designed to be safe, welcoming, and affirming spaces for trans people. They foster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection and belonging in environments free from judgment or discrimination</li> <li>• Informal peer support, where individuals can share experiences and build trust</li> <li>• Friendship and solidarity, reducing isolation and promoting mental wellbeing</li> </ul> <p>In a world where trans individuals often face exclusion, stigma, and barriers to care, these services offer something rare and essential: a place to be seen, respected, and supported.</p> <p>100% of individuals who attend these services live with at least one disability, mentally or physical, many with multiple, complex conditions. These services are not just helpful; they are essential for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving health outcomes through accessible, inclusive, and empowering environments</li> </ul>	<p>Trans people</p> <p>Trans people</p> <p>People with disabilities and long-term conditions</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering opportunities to build routines, engage socially, and stay active</li> <li>• Supporting people to manage long-term conditions, reduce isolation, and maintain independence</li> </ul> <p>These services provide a lifeline for disabled people—helping them not only to cope, but to thrive.</p> <p>It is well-documented that regular physical activity and access to greenspaces have a significant positive impact on mental health and overall wellbeing. The services supported by the Physical Activity and Greenspace Partnership are a vital part of this evidence-based approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These services help people reduce stress, anxiety, and depression through movement and connection with nature.</li> <li>• They offer accessible, inclusive opportunities for people who might otherwise face barriers to physical activity.</li> <li>• Participants report improved mood, increased energy, and a greater sense of purpose and connection.</li> </ul> <p>When people lose access to opportunities for connection, friendship, and informal support, they are far less likely to seek help when they need it most. This can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worsening mental health, as early signs of distress go unnoticed or unsupported</li> <li>• Increased risk of hospitalisation, as individuals reach crisis point without intervention</li> <li>• In the most tragic cases, increased risk of suicide, particularly among those already facing isolation, trauma, or systemic disadvantage</li> </ul> <p>They offer early intervention, human connection, and hope. Without them, people are left to struggle alone, and the consequences can be devastating.</p> <p>If these services are decommissioned, individuals will face a significant reduction in choice about where and how they receive support. This has serious implications:</p>	<p>All protected characteristics</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People will be forced into more clinical or statutory settings, which may not feel safe, welcoming, or appropriate for their needs.</li> <li>• The loss of community-based, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive options undermines the principle of person-centred care.</li> <li>• For many, these services are the only spaces where they feel comfortable seeking help - removing them may mean they don't seek support at all.</li> <li>• One unintended consequence is that people who can no longer access these services will cause an increased impact on other services within the health care system. This may include GP appointments, increased prescription costs (including increased antidepressant uptake or pharmaceutical intervention). There is also anecdotal evidence that alcohol and drug services will increase – likely further impacting on requirements for crisis support, social care and A&amp;E attendance. Anecdotally people are becoming well enough to return to work through these interventions</li> </ul> <p>Choice it is a fundamental part of dignity, empowerment, and recovery.</p> <p>One of the most valuable aspects of these services is their ability to offer longer-term, informal support that people can dip in and out of according to their needs. This approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respects individual rhythms and circumstances, making the support truly person-centred</li> <li>• Provides comfort and reassurance to people living in the community, knowing that help is there when they need it—without pressure or judgment</li> <li>• Encourages ongoing engagement, which builds trust, resilience, and wellbeing over time</li> </ul> <p>The community garden at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital is more than a therapeutic space during hospital stays. It remains a source of support, connection, and healing long after discharge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many individuals return to the garden after going home, finding comfort in a familiar, welcoming</li> </ul>	<p>People experiencing mental health issues, People who have been in hospital</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues, People who have been in hospital</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues, People who have been in hospital</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues, staff</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>environment that supports their ongoing recovery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The garden offers meaningful activities, such as picking fresh vegetables and sharing meals, which promote nutrition, routine, and social connection.</li> <li>• These shared experiences foster a sense of belonging and dignity, helping people feel part of a community that values them.</li> </ul> <p>This continuity of care is irreplaceable. Losing it would mean losing a vital bridge between hospital and home.  <b>Mitigation:</b> Edinburgh has many public and community gardens which offer volunteering opportunities and access to greenspace.</p> <p>People accessing support benefit from clear, structured referral pathways such as RefHelp and iThrive, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable staff and patients to work together to find the most appropriate, person-centred support</li> <li>• Offer a range of options, including community-based, non-clinical services that may feel more accessible and less stigmatising</li> <li>• Help ensure that individuals are matched with the right level of care, at the right time, in the right setting</li> </ul> <p>These pathways are only effective when there is a diverse ecosystem of services to refer into. Without community-based options, choice is reduced, and both staff and patients are left with fewer, less suitable alternatives.</p> <p>Engaging in meaningful activities provides individuals with a sense of purpose, structure, and connection. These elements are essential for maintaining mental health. When people have something to look forward to or work toward—whether it's a hobby, a job, volunteering, or creative expression—they are more likely to feel motivated, valued, and connected to others.</p> <p>Without these opportunities, individuals may experience stagnation, isolation, and a loss of direction. This can lead to feelings of hopelessness and a decline in mental well-being. Activities not only offer enjoyment and fulfilment but also serve as a protective factor against mental health challenges by</p>	<p>People experiencing mental health issues, staff</p> <p>Older people, middle years, People experiencing mental health issues  Older people, middle years, People experiencing mental health issues, people at risk of poverty, unemployed,</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>fostering routine, social interaction, and personal growth. <b>Mitigation:</b> Meaningful activities can be provided through a range of formal and informal supports. People with assessed needs that meet the criteria of critical and substantial will be eligible for social care support, including self-directed support which they could in turn use to purchase ongoing support from these providers at their own discretion.</p> <p>SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) play a crucial role by providing on-site support through their Employability Officer. This dedicated professional helps individuals explore and access employment and educational opportunities, offering guidance, confidence-building, and practical support. These pathways not only foster personal growth and financial independence but also contribute significantly to improved mental health by restoring a sense of purpose and direction. <b>Mitigation:</b> alternative employability services are provided through the Council, as this is not a delegated function of the EIJB.</p> <p>While Self-Directed Support (SDS) offers individuals greater choice and control over their care, many people seeking support for mental health, particularly those with trauma histories face a significant barrier: a lack of suitable services to purchase. Even with funding in place, the availability of services that are trauma-informed, mental health-focused, and that provide safe, appropriate spaces can be extremely limited.</p> <p>Organisations across the city work in partnership to provide holistic and inclusive support for individuals with diverse needs. A strong example of this is Garvald, which delivers group and gardening activities specifically designed for people with learning disabilities on the SAMH site. These activities not only promote skill-building and social interaction but also contribute to mental well-being and a sense of belonging. Such partnerships are vital in creating a network of care that spans across services, ensuring that no one is left behind. By pooling resources and expertise, organisations can offer more specialised, person-centred support that reflects the real needs of the community. <b>Mitigation:</b> The main contract for Redhall Walled Garden has been considered separately and is subject to a different</p>	<p>People at risk of poverty, unemployed.</p> <p>Older people, middle years, People experiencing mental health issues, trauma experienced</p> <p>People with learning disabilities</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>recommendation. Partnerships with SAMH are aligned with the main contract rather than the Lot 4 element.</p> <p>Nature-based and physical activities are inherently inclusive. They transcend language barriers, allowing people from all backgrounds and abilities to participate freely and meaningfully. Whether it's walking in a park, gardening, or joining a group exercise session, these activities offer a universal form of engagement that doesn't rely on verbal communication.</p> <p>This makes them especially valuable for individuals who may face challenges with language, literacy, or social interaction. By simply being present and active, people can experience connection, calm, and community—all of which are vital for mental and emotional well-being.</p> <p>Therapeutic and community-based environments thrive when people are encouraged to bring their own skills, traditions, and experiences. Whether it's through gardening techniques, creative arts, or sharing food, individuals contribute to a vibrant, inclusive atmosphere that reflects the diversity of the community.</p> <p>Food, in particular, becomes a powerful connector—offering a way to celebrate culture, build relationships, and foster understanding without the need for shared language. These contributions enrich the space, making it more welcoming and reflective of the people who use it.</p> <p>Inclusive groups and activities offer more than just structured support. They create safe, stigma-free spaces where individuals can build trust, relationships, and a sense of belonging. For many, these communities are lifelines. They provide consistency, compassion, and connection not only with peers but also with supportive staff who understand their journeys. For example, looked after children, who often rely on stable, nurturing environments to heal and grow.</p> <p>A high majority of individuals accessing these services have experienced significant trauma in their lives. For them, psychological safety is not a luxury—it is</p>	<p>Ethnic minority</p> <p>Ethnic minority</p> <p>Ethnic minority but all</p> <p>Ethnic minority but all</p> <p>Looked after children, people who have experienced trauma, People with diagnosis of long term complex mental health issue such as schizophrenia, bipolar</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>a necessity. Knowing they are in a safe, inclusive, and trauma-informed environment allows them to engage without fear, shame, or judgment.</p> <p>When these safe spaces are removed or disrupted, the risk of psychological harm increases—not only for the individuals themselves but also for those around them. Maintaining trauma-informed services is essential to protecting well-being, reducing crisis interventions, and supporting long-term recovery.</p> <p>Working in partnership with organisations like SCORE Scotland, which provides support around substance misuse, enables the creation of wraparound services that address the full spectrum of an individual's needs. These collaborative efforts ensure that people receive coordinated, person-centred care—from mental health and trauma support to addiction recovery and community integration.</p> <p>This holistic approach helps individuals stabilize more quickly, build confidence, and move forward in their recovery journey with the right supports in place. By pooling expertise and resources, partners can offer a seamless pathway to wellness, reducing duplication and ensuring no one falls through the cracks.</p> <p>Access to greenspace and opportunities for physical activity offer powerful benefits, not just for individuals, but for families. These activities are inclusive, low-cost, and accessible, making them ideal for people of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy together.</p> <p>When adults are exposed to and engage in outdoor activities, they are more likely to model healthy behaviours and encourage their children or young people to participate. This creates a ripple effect, fostering positive habits, stronger family bonds, and a shared appreciation for nature and well-being.</p> <p>By investing in and protecting these spaces, we're not just supporting individual health—we're nurturing healthier, more connected communities for generations to come.</p>	<p>Looked after children, people who have experienced trauma, People with diagnosis of long term complex mental health issue such as schizophrenia, bipolar</p> <p>People experiencing mental health issues and substance misuse</p> <p>Families, lone parents</p> <p>Families, lone parents</p> <p>Families, lone parents</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>A high number of unpaid carers use these services, if unavailable they may seek support from statutory services adding pressure on the system. These services can act as respite for an already undervalued workforce. Services can help build the resilience of the unpaid carer. <b>Mitigation:</b> People with a caring role can request an Adult Carer Support Plan, and potentially access support via the carers workstreams and funding.</p> <p>With no choice people could engage in anti-social behaviours. This could trigger response through social work, criminal justice systems, or trigger exacerbation of mental health issues leading to hospitalisation or again sadly someone doing harm to themselves or others.</p> <p>Decrease in support for people who have experienced homelessness, care experienced, substance misuse or gambling leading to poorer mental health</p> <p>Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Edinburgh (2024–2034) directly addresses the link between low income, reduced physical activity, and poorer health outcomes, and it sets out ambitious goals to tackle these interconnected issues.</p> <p>Services provide offer of progressions from volunteer to sessional workers, people go on to education, paid employment. Large social value to giving people the opportunity to build their own resilience.</p> <p><b>Mitigations:</b> While the benefits of physical activity and access to greenspaces is well evidenced, Edinburgh offers a wide variety of parks, greenspaces and opportunities for physical activity. Volunteering networks such as Friends of Parks organisations offer alternatives to funded support. This mitigation does not apply to Edinburgh Leisure as their services is not exclusively delivered in greenspace.</p> <p>Negative impact on staff with the emotional toll on both service users and staff can be profound, especially when clients experience heightened anxiety, distress, or suicidal ideation.</p>	<p>Unpaid Carers</p> <p>All protected characteristics, families, carers, community, staff</p> <p>People who have experienced homelessness, care experienced, substance misuse or gambling</p> <p>People from lower incomes, people at risk of falling into poverty</p> <p>People unemployed, volunteers</p> <p>People with lived experience of mental health and staff</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>Extra pressure on staff around where they can refer people to. People have said they will just need to go back to their GP putting extra pressure and cost on our system.</p>	<p>Staff, EIJB</p>
<p>Even the discussion of potential changes to trusted services is already having a damaging and irreversible impact: Valued staff are leaving now, not waiting for formal decisions. The uncertainty alone is enough to drive them out.</p>	<p>Staff, EIJB Staff</p>
<p>Specialist skills and relationships built over years are being lost. These cannot be quickly or easily replaced. Providers are destabilized, struggling to maintain service quality with shrinking teams and rising anxiety. Recruitment is harder than ever, as the sector is seen as insecure and undervalued. The emotional toll on remaining staff is growing, increasing the risk of further attrition.</p>	
<p>All partners across the sector are now at serious risk of losing up to 15 highly skilled staff members each. This is a loss of capacity, continuity, and care. This will see the loss of trusted relationships with vulnerable individuals and communities. Impact on volunteers and peer support networks, which provide informal, cost-effective, and culturally sensitive support that cannot be replicated by statutory services. This will put increased pressure on Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) to fill the gap with more expensive, less personalised services with potential higher long-term costs for the health and social care system. It may also cause reduced outcomes for people who rely on early intervention, community-based support, and trusted relationships.</p>	<p>Staff, volunteers, peers, EIJB  Staff</p>
<p>For Edinburgh Leisure, they will also experience the same level of loss of specialist and expert staff members who can support with both mental and physical health. They would face the potential redeployment or redundancy of 6 staff members and due to the short timescales and uncertain outcome of this proposal this risk is increased, further adding to the anxiety of staff as well as financial and emotional burden.</p>	<p>Staff</p>
<p>The potential compounding pressure on remaining staff not only affects morale and wellbeing, but also introduces serious health and safety risks.</p>	<p>Staff, Providers</p>

<b>Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p>It will be difficult to rebuild services with new staff once skills have gone as added cost for investment in training and development due to provision of mental health support. Services are already under financial constraints, and further requirements for recruitment and training would exacerbate this. As well as the fact there would be a loss of experienced staff to deliver the required training; there is also only an onboarding of temporary staff currently which potentially means a higher turnover and requirement for more training.</p> <p>Uncertainty for staff, but more concerned about users, how do they work with their existing groups to tell them major impact on their health and wellbeing with loss of services – difficulty on staff on how they support and therefore more negative impact of their wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Mitigations</b> Both SAMH and the Cyrenians hold a number of contracts with the EHSCP to run a variety of support services. It is possible that some staff may be able to be redeployed across different services through this funding. However, it is recognised that this may not be possible in all cases.</p>	

<b>Environment and Sustainability including climate change emissions and impacts</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<b>Positive</b>	
<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p>Council colleagues have expressed serious concerns about the potential impact of proposed cuts to Redhall Walled Garden. This site is more than just a green space—it is a maintained and protected sanctuary that supports both community well-being and local biodiversity.</p> <p>If funding is withdrawn, the consequences could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats to wildlife and biodiversity, as the garden currently provides a safe and nurtured habitat for a variety of species.</li> <li>• Degradation of a valued community asset, which has been carefully maintained and cultivated over time.</li> </ul>	<p>Environmental factor</p>

<b>Environment and Sustainability including climate change emissions and impacts</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p>The garden plays a crucial role in promoting environmental sustainability, community engagement, and mental health recovery. Its loss would be deeply felt across multiple levels of the community.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Edinburgh is a well-connected city with a wealth of parks and greenspaces, including many owned and maintained by the Council, and with many biodiverse spaces. The environmental impact of the loss of one garden is likely to be minimal.</p>	

<b>Economic</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Approx £23m of EIJB spend will still be delivered via block contracts, primarily with third sector providers. This will continue to support local businesses and employees.</p>	<p>Local businesses and staff</p>
<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p>A significant proportion of individuals seeking mental health support come from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas 1 and 2, which represent the most deprived communities. These individuals are often at high risk of falling into or remaining in poverty, facing multiple barriers such as unemployment, poor housing, limited access to services, and social isolation.</p> <p>This socioeconomic disadvantage not only increases the likelihood of experiencing mental health challenges but also limits access to appropriate, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive support. Without targeted investment and tailored services, the cycle of poverty and poor mental health is likely to continue, deepening inequality and reducing life chances for those most in need.</p> <p>The removal or reduction of support services would significantly limit opportunities for individuals to maximize their income and achieve greater</p>	<p>People at risk of falling into poverty</p> <p>People at risk of falling into poverty, vulnerable people</p>

Economic	Affected populations
<p>independence. Many of these services provide essential pathways to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employability support, including CV building, interview preparation, and job placements.</li> <li>• Educational and skills development, helping individuals gain qualifications or re-enter learning environments.</li> <li>• Financial guidance, such as benefits advice, budgeting support, and access to entitlements.</li> </ul> <p>Edinburgh Leisure has launched its five-year strategic programme aimed at delivering measurable advances through growth in usage, efficiency, effectiveness, and financial sustainability, while remaining steadfastly aligned with our mission to enhance Edinburgh’s health and wellbeing by 2030. As part of this, we are addressing a £2.5 million funding challenge in 2025/26, ensuring that Edinburgh Leisure remains resilient and well-positioned for long-term impact.</p> <p>For individuals already facing barriers due to trauma, mental health challenges, or social disadvantage, these services are often the only bridge to economic participation. Without them, people risk becoming further isolated, dependent, and vulnerable to poverty.</p> <p>Staff facing redundancy—especially those in lower-paid, frontline, or part-time roles—are at significant risk of falling into poverty. Loss of income can quickly lead to rent arrears, food insecurity, and debt. Without targeted support, individuals may struggle to re-enter the workforce, leading to prolonged unemployment. Increased demand on welfare services, housing support, and mental health services.</p> <p><b>Mitigations:</b> Employability support, educational and skills development and benefits/financial advice can be accessed from the Council rather than be relying on EHSCP services. These are not delegated functions of the EIJB.</p> <p>Three of the providers in Lot 4 hold alternative contracts with the EHSCP. This represents ongoing financial support for these organisations.</p>	<p>People at risk of falling into poverty, vulnerable people, unemployed, people on benefits</p> <p>People at risk of falling into poverty, vulnerable people, unemployed, people on benefits</p> <p>Staff</p>

9. **Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors and if so how will equality, human rights including children’s rights, environmental and sustainability issues be addressed?**

The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership commissions Lot 4 services from the third sector. Robust contract management arrangements ensure that all our duties relating to equality, human rights including children’s rights, environmental and sustainability issues are discharged appropriately.

10. **Consider how you will communicate information about this policy/ service change to children and young people and those affected by sensory impairment, speech impairment, low level literacy or numeracy, learning difficulties or English as a second language? Please provide a summary of the communications plan.**

We would need to work with our communication team to develop a robust strategy. This should be done alongside our impacted partnerships to ensure people understand the mitigation to the loss of any service or support. Especially within the populations affected we need to provide clear idea of how we lessen any negative impacts to reduce anxieties.

11. **Is the plan, programme, strategy or policy likely to result in significant environmental effects, either positive or negative? If yes, it is likely that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be required and the impacts identified in the IIA should be included in this. See section 2.10 in the Guidance for further information.**

No

12. **Additional Information and Evidence Required**

No

13. **Specific to this IIA only, what recommended actions have been, or will be, undertaken and by when? (these should be drawn from 7 – 11 above) Please complete:**

<b>Specific actions (as a result of the IIA which may include financial implications, mitigating actions and risks of cumulative impacts)</b>	<b>Who will take them forward (name and job title)</b>	<b>Deadline for progressing</b>	<b>Review date</b>
Regularly review the IIA to ensure any new impacts are captured	Andy Hall, Director: Strategy	September 2025	Quarterly review
Agree a recommendation for approval by the EIJB for these	Andy Hall, Director: Strategy	8 August 2025	N/A

<b>Specific actions (as a result of the IIA which may include financial implications, mitigating actions and risks of cumulative impacts)</b>	<b>Who will take them forward (name and job title)</b>	<b>Deadline for progressing</b>	<b>Review date</b>
contracts/SLAs and notify providers in advance.			
Explore opportunities available through council parks and greenspace e.g. <i>'friends of'</i>	Project Team, EHSCP	TBC	
Agree monitoring of the impacts identified above (eg A&E waiting times, suicide rates, demand for statutory services)	Susan McMillan, Performance and Evaluation	October 2025	Annual review
With the reduction of these services, a gap in provision may appear while services are recommissioned. This might impact on EHSCP requirements of the Strategic plan – actions will need to be taken to meet these commitments.	Andy Hall, Director: Strategy	TBC	

**14. Are there any negative impacts in section 8 for which there are no identified mitigating actions?**

There are no other services in Edinburgh that offer the level of mental health support required for people who attend these services, they are often complex and need staff who are fully trained.

**15. How will you monitor how this proposal affects different groups, including people with protected characteristics?**

Onward discussion with any organisation impacted on. Review of actions from this IIA frequently alongside providers. Ongoing monitoring of data to recognise any impacts or trends.

**16. Sign off by Head of Service**

**Name: Andy Hall**

**Date: 15 August 2025**

**17. Publication**

Completed and signed IIAs should be sent to:

[integratedimpactassessments@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:integratedimpactassessments@edinburgh.gov.uk) to be published on the Council website [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/impactassessments](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/impactassessments)  
**Edinburgh Integration Joint Board/Health and Social Care**  
[sarah.bryson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.bryson@edinburgh.gov.uk) to be published at  
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