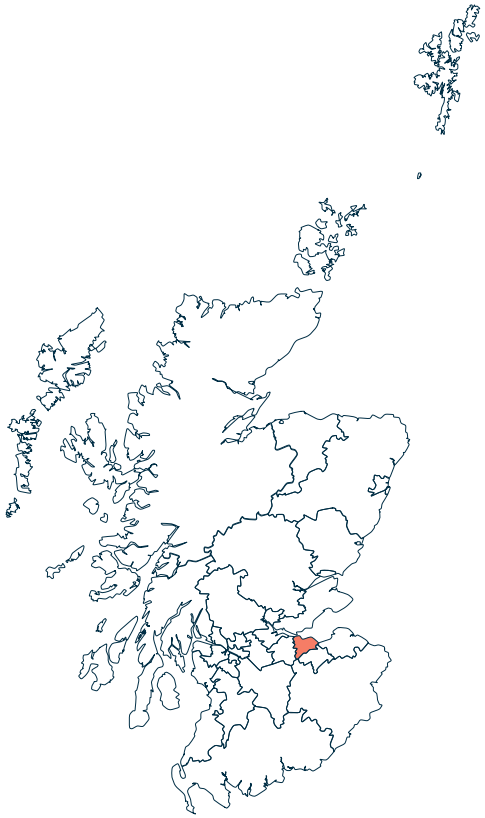
# Granton Waterfront: Investing in a place, not just a project



**LOCATION:** Edinburgh

**DATE:** ongoing

**OUTCOME:** Place | Investment | Strategy



## The challenge

Granton Waterfront is one of Scotland's largest and most ambitious brownfield regeneration projects.

Located on Edinburgh's northern coastline, around three miles from the city centre, the former industrial waterfront is being transformed into a sustainable new coastal town for Scotland's capital.

The wider programme is expected to deliver around 3,500 net zero carbon homes, alongside new business and commercial space, cultural and leisure facilities, community services including a school and health centre, and what is planned to be Europe's largest coastal park.

But regeneration on this scale is about so much more than constructing new buildings. The



**3,500**
NET ZERO HOMES EXPECTED TO BE DELIVERED

challenge was to connect investment in housing and infrastructure with the longer-term outcomes that matter to people and communities: improved wellbeing, better access and movement, high-quality public spaces, environmental enhancement, economic opportunity and greater community ownership.

## A new approach to investment

A key milestone came through Scottish Government support for the first phase of development, combining funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund with the innovative Place Based Accelerator programme.

Up to £42 million has been committed over 20 years, enabling the development of 847 net zero homes, including 387 affordable homes, alongside a new primary school, commercial accommodation and supporting infrastructure.

Developed by the Scottish Government, Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) and the City of Edinburgh Council, the Place Accelerator represents a different way of thinking about public investment. Rather than focusing solely on individual buildings or infrastructure projects, it links investment to the wider outcomes a place is designed to achieve.

At Granton, this means bringing together housing, infrastructure, public realm and community activity around shared goals, including improved wellbeing, stronger public spaces, better movement and access, more effective use of resources and greater community participation and stewardship.

Success is therefore measured not simply by the number of homes or assets delivered, but by the benefits created for the people and communities who live, work and spend time there.

## SFT's role

SFT has helped shape Granton Waterfront as a practical test of how infrastructure investment can be planned around long-term place outcomes rather than individual projects or assets.

Working with the Scottish Government and the City of Edinburgh Council, SFT helped develop the Place Accelerator as an outcomes-based investment model linking public funding to measurable benefits for communities.

The work brought together SFT's core strengths: providing independent advice, brokering

collaboration between national and local partners, bringing commercial and investment insight, and translating strategic ambition into a practical funding and outcomes framework.

SFT acted as an enabler, a critical friend and innovator, helping partners move beyond a traditional regeneration funding approach and towards one that recognises wider social, economic and environmental benefits.



**£250mil**

HAS BEEN INVESTED IN THE SURROUNDING AREA

## Transformation underway

Progress is already visible across the waterfront. More than £250 million has been invested in the surrounding area through earlier phases of development and infrastructure improvements.

This includes net zero-ready affordable homes delivered through SFT's Edinburgh Homes Demonstrator. The iconic Granton Gasholder has been restored as public space, while Granton Station has been transformed into a creative hub. New commercial and cultural activity is also bringing fresh energy to the area.

The first phase is expected to act as a catalyst for further investment, including enhanced walking and cycling connections, expanded green spaces, public realm improvements and environmental remediation. It also aims to support employment, apprenticeships and investment in local organisations, particularly in communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

## A national exemplar

Granton Waterfront has the potential to become a national exemplar for sustainable urban regeneration.

By combining housing delivery, environmental enhancement, community wealth building and place-based investment, it aims to demonstrate how regeneration can support Scotland's housing, climate and inclusive growth ambitions.

The Place Accelerator underpins this approach, embedding long-term social, economic and environmental outcomes alongside physical development.

Ultimately, Granton Waterfront is about investing in more than buildings. It is about creating a thriving, inclusive and climate-resilient community, and demonstrating how infrastructure investment can be judged not simply by what it builds, but by the lasting benefits it creates for people and place.

> The Place Accelerator represents an innovative way of thinking about public investment. The focus on setting targets around wider outcomes and tracking this throughout the project's life ensures that the investment in Granton meets the Council's vision for regeneration in the north of Edinburgh. It ensures that the communities who surround the new development will benefit from improved health and wellbeing, have access to better usable public spaces, enjoy better movement within the local area and to the wider city and feel a greater sense of empowerment through community participation and stewardship. This good work has been in large part to the successful partnership working between Scottish Futures Trust, Scottish Government and the City of Edinburgh Council and their willingness to consider how funding large scale regeneration can be done in a different way to what has gone before.
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> SAT PATEL, HEAD OF MAJOR PROJECTS COMMISSIONING AND DELIVERY, THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL