

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE)
Preface to Kelly & Company Report

1. The Report “A Future for Inverleith House” was produced by Kelly and Company for the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and was funded by Creative Scotland. It was commissioned in March 2016.
2. The trigger for the report was a change in funding arrangements. The purpose of the Kelly Report was to make recommendations on how a programme of contemporary art exhibitions at Inverleith House might be maintained and developed, addressing audience development, public engagement and financial sustainability.
3. The final Report was received by RBGE and Creative Scotland in August 2016. RBGE’s Board of Trustees considered the Report at its meeting on 5th October 2016. The Board discussed the matter in detail and its conclusions were:
 - a. *Inverleith House would no longer be dedicated to contemporary art.*
 - b. *RBGE would continue to include creative art events and exhibitions in its programme, and would discuss the future programme and the potential for funding with Creative Scotland.*
 - c. *The Regius Keeper would investigate the future use of Inverleith House as part of the drive to increase income/make financial savings.*
6. In reaching these conclusions Trustees noted that Inverleith House had built up an excellent reputation as a contemporary art gallery and had contributed much to the “Scottish art scene”. However, it was the view of the Trustees that the financial model proposed in the Report was high risk, required further financial investment and included untested assumptions. They further agreed that the need to increase income meant that it was no longer appropriate for RBGE to subsidise a dedicated contemporary art gallery. Although the Board did not accept the central recommendation of the Kelly and Co Report, a number of options for making Inverleith House more relevant to and integrated with the work of the Garden were suggested and will be considered as the future events and exhibitions programme is developed.
7. Following discussions between RBGE, the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland it has been agreed to establish a short life Working Group to advise the RBGE Board on the strategic direction of its programme for arts and cultural engagement across RBGE that would include, but not be restricted to, exhibition making at Inverleith House. The Group will be convened by an independent Chair and will be tasked with establishing a clear vision for the development of an arts programme that would align with and amplify the core mission of RBGE and that would be achievable and sustainable within the current financial climate. The Group, which will include senior staff from RBGE, Creative Scotland and invited expert advisors will be asked to: review the current position and approach of the RBGE with regard to exhibition making and other arts /cultural activity; to establish an informed view of programming possibilities; to test and establish a series of options for wider consideration by the Trustees at their meeting in June 2017.

17th November 2016