

The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

(1a) Organisation/group name: Trees and Seas Outdoor Adventures

(1b) Project name: Foraging a feast at Forest Fridays

(2) Tell us about your organisation / group (what do you do?) (150 words maximum)

Trees and Seas Outdoor Adventures is a small Community Interest company that encourages children, young people and families to prioritise time in the outdoors. Our vision is that healthy, inclusive outdoor play is a natural part of childhood regardless of background, race, ethnicity, ability, or circumstance. We aim to reduce the barriers of disability and deprivation by running weekly sessions that are suitable for children with additional support needs in areas of high deprivation: Gracemount/Liberton/Gilmerton and Craigmillar.

The sessions allow children to enjoy the natural spaces in their community and to develop care for and pride of their environment. Sessions are child-led, and we encourage free play. However, in response to requests from children and parents, we also offer activities focussed on the food growing cycle: planning; planting; harvesting; foraging; preparing and cooking the food, providing a hot meal for the children at the end of every session.

(3a) Please select the fund criteria which your project relates to (Select all that apply)

- Create opportunities for community leadership and learning on climate change
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions within communities and contribute to the net-zero target for Edinburgh
- Generate sustainable projects for the benefit of local people to build resilience or adapt to climate change within communities
- Build relationships between neighbourhoods of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds to work together on just, equitable and accessible

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climate and resilience activities contributing to the cities net zero agenda, also ensuring that activities work towards reducing or removing barriers for disabled people in the transition to net zero.

(3b) Tell us about the project you would use the money for. (500 words maximum)

The money will be used to offer FREE spaces to support 30 children per week during term time: 15 spaces at Gracemount Community Garden and 15 spaces at Bridgend Allotment next to Craigmillar Castle Park. The two groups run after school for 3 hours on a Friday and are called 'Forest Fridays'. They have been running since 2019.

Each weekly session has a minimum of two qualified and experienced adult leaders and may also be supported by trainees or volunteers. We currently have around 50% of our participants in both locations who've had a clinical diagnosis, so having three trained adults have been essential to support their needs. Each session is unique but is likely to include a balance between free play and guided or group activity sessions, such as a craft, learning a new skill, gardening, and cooking. Spontaneous play that encourages the use of imagination or creativity is encouraged. All the sessions take place outside but sometimes a shelter is created for protection against wet or windy weather. A fire or cooking stove have become the centre of the activity space and children learn to behave sensibly around a fire pit. Some activities involve an element of risk, but this is carefully assessed by the leaders and managed in a way that builds resilience and a responsibility for personal safety. The skilled leaders are very sensitive to the needs of the children, but parents are also encouraged to share any concerns or positive outcomes they may notice.

Christopher says "Friday is my favourite day of the week. When I get to forest school and see my guys I feel so happy inside. Sometimes I get there and take a deep breath and I feel better"

"We have met many other families in these sessions who also live in the area, so it has also helped us settle into and feel part of a new community here in Edinburgh. We relocated just over a year ago to the Inch due to the relative affordability of homes here, after having struggled for years to get onto the housing ladder in Edinburgh. We're so glad that services such as these exist and so grateful for the Trees & Seas team for their enlightened vision for our community."

Sessions will run during term-time for a year starting Spring 2023 and will benefit approximately 30 children each week. There will be gardening clubs throughout the holidays to maintain the plots supported by the community gardeners from both locations. The local produce grown by the children will be available for the community as well as the parents and carers to take home for free so that the families can benefit from fresh, organic 'field to fork' food.

One of our parents asked at a recent parent consultation: 'can you continue to offer seasonal cooking, foraging and other things related to nature?'

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(4) Describe your project in no more than 30 words (this will be used for publicity)

Foraging a feast weekly session for children aged 6-12 focussed on growing, harvesting, cooking and eating organic food. Located in underserved areas of Edinburgh, inclusive to children with additional support needs.

(5a) Who do you hope will benefit from this project?

The project will benefit children and their families in two areas of high deprivation: EH16 and EH17. Both are communities that have very limited access to the physical and mental health and social benefits of outdoor nature play. The project will benefit these communities by reducing the barriers of disability and economic deprivation through offering safe access to natural spaces, where children can grow and prepare fresh 'field to fork' organic food, including enjoying a hot cooked meal.

The local produce grown by the children on these sites will be available for parents and carers to take home for free so that the families can benefit from fresh, organic, and sustainable fruit and vegetables.

The project will benefit children with disabilities: 40-50% of the children who attended our session have additional support needs (ASN) such as Autism, ADHD and Down Syndrome. This allows both children with ASN and typically developing children to integrate and learn from each other.

(5b) Is your group open to all?

Yes

No

If no, please explain:

The project is aimed at the local children and families. Our catchment includes neighbouring areas that fall within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) which are Gracemount, Burdiehouse, Southhouse, Liberton, Gilmerton, Moredun, Craigmillar, Niddrie, and The Inch.

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(5c) Will the project have a positive impact on any of the following protected characteristics?

Disability

Marriage
or civil
partnership

Pregnancy
and
maternity

Race

Sex

Age

Sexual
orientation

Religion or
belief

Gender
reassignment

(6) Where will the project be delivered?

In the two existing sites of Gracemount Gardens/The Mansion and Bridgend Allotment in Craigmillar Castle Park. Both community gardens are organic, don't use pesticides and follow the 'no dig' method.

(7) Project start date: April 2023
Project end date: March 2024

(8) How many people do you hope will benefit from your project? 30 children will attend each week so encounters will be 1140 estimate. However, some children will attend week after week throughout the year.

(9) Is anyone else working with you on the project?

Yes

No

If yes, please tell us about this:

Yes, we will be working in partnership with two charities.

1. Transition Edinburgh South (Charity No.SC050894) trading as Gracemount Community Gardens who hold the lease to the allotments, where we have our own growing plot.
2. Bridgend Community allotments at Bridgend Farmhouse (Charity No. SC048396)

At both sites there are the facilities for children to plant, grow and space to cook food safely.

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(10) Do you require permission from anyone or any additional insurance to carry out your project?

Yes

No

If yes, please tell us about this:

No: we have public liability insurance and forest school insurance.
As well as outdoor cooking and hygiene certificates and outdoor first aid certificates.

(11) Please outline a breakdown of the cost of delivering this project (including VAT).		(12) Do you have additional funding or income from charges which will contribute to this project? If yes, please detail below	
Goods/Equipment/Time etc	£	Source	£
Staff salaries	9500	In kind donations	500
Equipment for safe cooking	850	Seeds and plant donations	400
Food & drinks	760	Firstport award	2000
Local gardener support	3800		
Fire wood	760		
Total Expenditure	15670	Total income	2900

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