

The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

(1a) Organisation/group name:

Friends of Gayfield Square Gardens

(1b) Project name:

“Making Gayfield Square Gardens Even Better”

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

Friends of Gayfield Square Gardens (FGSG) was formally established in 2021 to enhance the existing garden as a welcoming community space and to encourage biodiversity in its city centre location. The value of this approach was first recognised during the pandemic when the desire for open space and to enjoy nature saw an unprecedented use by the community. To maintain the gardens in good condition considerable work and collaboration with CEC Parks department is required. The immediate aim is to enhance the garden so that it continues to be an open green inclusive space to reach out for nature, enjoy the beauty of plants as well as act as a community meeting point. This is wholly in line with the creation of attractive and accessible green public spaces in Edinburgh and the principles and practical aspects of the “20-minute neighbourhood” initiative. This will help reduce car use and strengthen cross-community relationships.

(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 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.

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

Gayfield Square Garden is a pocket park in the city centre of Edinburgh, and one of the only traditional Georgian Square gardens still open to all, including diverse groups from beyond the immediate vicinity. Over many years it has received only basic care and maintenance, unlike many private gardens. We would like to fundamentally change that, ensuring a flourishing Gayfield Garden is egalitarian, welcoming, and loved for all, by all. The garden is situated in one of the most diverse parts of Edinburgh. Our aim is to welcome all people equally, the only caveat, that they should have the desire to respect and enjoy the garden and nature. We hope to encourage wider engagement and increased community feeling through caring for the garden, regular community activities and representing the garden as a hub of friendship, involvement, and participation. This will also help create a greener, more biodiverse space in the heart of the city. Crucially we will also involve many local community members (including St Mary's pupils) in making these positive changes.

Our immediate priorities are to improve the main entrance way, and the two side entrances to make them properly accessible for disabled visitors and to reverse the degradation of the garden. This includes restoration of the grass/tackling muddy areas, preservation of the existing Spring bulbs and additional planting (bulbs, bushes, and trees) to improve the garden for wildlife. We would like to encourage passers-by to respect the garden and not use it as a bin by improving planting and increasing colour from plants and flowers (focused upon the Elm Row end of the garden). We want to incorporate walking/wheelchair routes to facilitate the needs of all those using the garden. Additionally, to encourage understanding of seasonal and food cycles we plan to plant bushes and fruit trees around the garden edges to help with the increased rainfall in Edinburgh expected from climate change. This will require several water butts to collect water (the garden has no access to water) and create an area of covered hard standing for community activities, exercise, and gatherings. The Garden has a wide range of users from the surrounding area. We have managed to make it a welcoming place over the past 3 years, and its importance to the entire local community was evident during the pandemic. The problem of loneliness in the city centre is very concerning. We would like to offer a regular coffee/meeting event for people interested in the garden, but we need the infrastructure to do so. FGSG has already successfully encouraged the local community to share in its vision of creating a welcoming, open green inclusive area through holding a number of successful community events. Having built this grassroots support we would love to make our ideas a reality.

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

Creating a flourishing Gayfield Square Garden, Edinburgh City's Pocket Park. Accessible, inclusive, friendly. Perfect for families and dogs. A nature haven in the city centre offering community activities throughout the year.

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

Gayfield Square caters for a dynamic and diverse community. It ranges from the residents who live in the immediate vicinity to the local primary school (St Mary's Broughton) as well as many visitors to the city given its city centre location.

(5b) Is your group open to all?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If no, please explain:

(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

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(6) Where will the project be delivered?

Gayfield Square Gardens EH1

(7) Project start date:

Project end date:

April 2023

(8) How many people do you hope will benefit from your project?

1000+ (based upon residents, schools

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

☐ Yes

☒ No

If yes, please tell us about this:

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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:

The Garden is a public space under CEC administration. FGSG have had close engagement with the Parks department who have actively encouraged the initiatives planned.

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| (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 | £ |
| 10 days @£20 ph x 7hrs for 2 gardeners | 2800 | FGSG Community Fund raising | 500 |
| Provision of Pathway materials | 5000 | | |
| Main entrance materials/labour | 5000 | | |
| Provision of trees/logs/bark | 5000 | | |
| Provision of bulbs | 100 | | |
| Community toolshed | 700 | | |
| School eco materials | 600 | | |
| Purchase of tools and toolbox | 500 | | |
| Total Expenditure | 19700 | Total income | 500 |

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