

END OF AWARD REPORT

Please complete and return this form by 31st March or within 2 months of project completion.

Please note this information may be made available to the public.

Receipts (or good quality scans of receipts) should also be submitted with the report.

PROJECT DETAILS
Name of Group: Edinburgh Agroecology Coop
Main Contact Rob Davidson
Postal Address (if relevant): 58 Pilton Park, Edinburgh E-mail address: info@lauristonfarm.org
Date of Grant Award: 23rd May 2023 Amount of Grant Award: 20000
Briefly describe your project aims (please refer to your original application and also note any later changes/developments to the project): The project aimed to expand the facilities in our community allotments by increasing the space for communal tool storage and to create a community kitchen in order to facilitate the preparation and eating of healthy, fresh food in a welcoming community setting: building positive habits and perceptions around food growing and consumption, whilst increasing community connection and resilience.
PROJECT DELIVERY
Did your project achieve its aims? (please tick all that apply)✓
Partially <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Really <input type="checkbox"/>
Still Working on it <input type="checkbox"/>
Achieved other unanticipated outcomes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SPENDING YOUR GRANT AWARD
Please give details of all the items funded by the grant. Copies of receipts for all expenditures must be supplied.

Item	Cost
cladco - materials for sheds in community garden	3,214.74
thistle - building materials for community sheds	1,350.53
sam jones - screws	344.79
sam jones - screws	139.04
thistle - building materials for kitchen	705.32
sam jones - community shed	1,600.00
lisa houston - food for workshop	13.80

lisa houston - refreshments for building workshop	74.34
lisa houston - building workshop materials	33.53
hamish darrah - hazel stakes	30.00
ETL	2,000.00
Staff overtime	280.00
Granton Community Gardeners - Workshop refreshments - building workshops	49.00
lloyds - LH tool station	88.18
lloyds - LH ebay	56.97
lloyds - LH BandM	8.32
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sam jones - allotment kitchen	60.00
Staff Overtime	280.00
lloyds - LH buckaroo	44.38
lloyds - LH ITS	169.99
Dv containers - IBCs for rain water harvesting	628.71
komachi goto - Design work on kitchen	150.00
thistle - improvements to community sheds (drainage)	294.25
thistle - community kitchen	199.64
lloyds - ebay - IBC covers	36.58
lloyds - clay cellar	85.40
lloyds - b and m	20.00
thistle - thistle supplies for decking	600.71
sam jones - community garden sheds and kitchen 081223 (part one of invoice payment)	495.00
sam jones - community garden drainage	384.00
sam jones - community kitchen floor	560.56
sam jones - community garden decking	986.59
thistle - thistle supplies for drainage	151.48
thistle - thistle supplies for decking	600.71
thistle - thistle supplies for decking	34.86
Ruby Fishbacher - kitchen work	166.95
thistle - drainage etc	78.52
thistle - thistle supplies for oven	252.23
lloyds - vitcas	101.94
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sam jones - community garden decking	986.59
sam jones - community garden ramp and railings	350.00
sam jones - trenches and groundwork	260.00
ETL - for weekend workshop kitchen build	1,357.94
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Granton Community Gardeners - bread for workshops etc	32.50
Total	19,358.09

*small underspend will be used to put a secure door on the kitchen

How many people were involved in delivering the project?

Paid Staff:

1 x staff member coordinated the project and led the earthen building workshops. An additional 3 x freelance staff were hired for work on the building. And 1 staff person from Edinburgh Tool Library coordinated and led 3 of the weekend workshops.

Volunteers:

Over 60 volunteers attended workshops to build the kitchen in a series of workshops. Several of these volunteers attended multiple sessions. We had over 150 attendances across the 20 workshops we ran to complete the kitchen. (this doesn't include the time spent by the architecture students.) In addition the Men's Group from Pilton Community Health Project built a raised bed across the front of the kitchen over several weeks with 4-6 men attending each time.

Volunteer hours:

91 hours of volunteer time during workshops. Additionally 3 Masters students from the University of Edinburgh Architects programme have put in many hours to design and build the clay oven.

IMPACT

Criterion 1: Create opportunities for community leadership and learning on climate change

If relevant, please tell us how your project met criteria 1 of the fund (300 words max):

n/a - we did not select this criterion in our application.

Criterion 2: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions within communities and contribute to the net-zero agenda for Edinburgh

- **Qualitative assessment: If relevant, please tell us how your project met criteria 2 of the fund (300 words max):**

A recent critical study (Hawes JK, Goldstein BP, Newell JP, et al. . Comparing the carbon footprints of urban and conventional agriculture. Nat Cities. 2024) suggested that for some veg crops it is likely that the carbon footprint of allotment crops could be higher than conventionally grown veg crops. They did, however, add that mitigation for that would be through the use of high quality long term infrastructure, using urban waste as inputs for horticulture and infrastructure and through very high levels of social engagement.

Quote from the study: "Urban agriculture offers a variety of social, nutritional and place-based environmental benefits, which make it an appealing feature of future sustainable cities," said Hawes. "This work shines light on ways to ensure that urban agriculture benefits the climate, as well as the people and places it serves."

With this fund we have built incredibly robust sheds for our allotment holders that will far out last the scope of that study and deliver good efficiency. We have also used our own clay, recycled wood, recycled glass and other waste materials to build the kitchen and demonstrated a building technique that is environmentally friendly when the construction industry accounts for 40% of global energy-related CO2 emissions. Lisa, our staff person who coordinated this project and led the earthen building component wrote this article about this here: <https://www.lauristonfarm.scot/news/earthen-building/>

The horticultural inputs we supply for plot holders are all waste products - wood chip from nearby tree surgeons and compost made from brown bin waste. When we add in the scale of our project and the very short distances our ploholders travel then the veg we produce, aided by the facilities built with this fund, has a very low carbon footprint.

Criterion 3: Generate sustainable projects for the benefit of local people to build resilience or adapt to climate change within communities.

If relevant, please tell us how your project met criteria 3 of the fund (300 words max):

With up to 50 plots and ten ploholders per plot the community growing area at Lauriston Farm will support up to 500 new community growers. As well as growing many crops with a lower carbon footprint than imported goods the project will build climate resilience and social capital in a number of ways.

Climate change comes with the major issue of resource depletion, a rapidly rising cost of living and the threat of social unease. This fund has helped us take a major step toward providing a community facility that will help ensure a local food supply and a large base for positive social gatherings. The security of the new tool sheds and the potential for large social gatherings in and around the outdoor kitchen bring a strong sense of place for our plot holders.

A recent Social Return on Investment (SROI) study of Lauriston farm concluded that due to the combined effects of the place in nature (with the biodiversity and stunning views), the food production on site and the *massive* social capital generated by the community growing area we have and SROI figure of 6.5. That means every £1 invested in the farm is worth £6.5 to society.

Criterion 4: 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 city's net zero agenda, also ensuring that activities work towards reducing or removing barriers for disabled people in the transition to net zero.

If relevant, please tell us how your project met criteria 4 of the fund (300 words max):

The allotments at the farm are run a little differently from conventional allotments around Edinburgh. No plot is given to an individual household. In order to get a plot, you have to either be an organisation working in the local area or a group of local neighbours.

This means that we have a hugely diverse range of people growing food together. Currently organisations include Fresh Start who work with people who have experienced or who are at risk of homelessness, Project Esperanza who work with migrant women in North Edinburgh, Pilton Community Health Project, Positive Paths who work with young people who are struggling to access formal education. We also have 2 Nepalese community organisations with a plot each. Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Committee (ELREC) have a plot and their work focuses on minority groups in Edinburgh. Bethany Trust brings people they work with to their plot to grow vegetables.

We have groups of neighbours from all the areas immediately surrounding the farm. The farm has Muirhouse on one side (considered an area of extremely high levels of multiple deprivation) and Barnton which is a very affluent area. It's important to us that neighbours from both those areas are working together, sharing stories about how to grow vegetables in nature-friendly ways and swapping seeds, plants and stories.

The kitchen is instrumental in having a space to deepen people coming together. It means that now people can also cook together using vegetables they have grown and sharing recipes, in a beautiful outdoor setting. We will have other groups from the local area using the space too and to this end are currently improving the accessibility of the kitchen with a wheelchair ramp already installed and a path to come.

We are excited that the multiple nationalities, cultures and age groups on the farm will be able to share more. Currently we have people from the local areas with cultural heritage from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Poland, Ukraine, Hong Kong, Burma, Poland, France, Sweden and Nepal. There are at least 134 households regularly engaging on the farm across 36 plots. In terms of individuals who benefit from the site - as many of the households are families the number will be well over 200.

Tell us about the people who benefitted from your project. Please provide quantified metrics where possible

e.g. Overall numbers of groups/people, Number of events/workshops organised, Number of charities/groups engaged in the project, etc.

There are at least 134 households regularly engaging on the farm across 36 plots. In terms of individuals who benefit from the site - as many of the households are families the number will be well over 200.

The charities who are engaging with it are Pilton Community Health Project's Men's Health Project, Fresh Start, Project Esperanza, Edinburgh Tool Library, Positive Paths, Positive Futures, Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equalities Project.

Tell us about any other outcomes achieved.

e.g. What changes and/or benefit(s) did your project bring?

What did people feel was the most important or valuable aspect of your project?

I think people were surprised by what a great and beautiful a building could be created out of mud and straw and recycled bottles..

We hadn't expected to have the Masters of Architecture Students helping us and there was lots of good mutual learning and discussions around techniques and sustainable construction.

There was very nice community building happening as folk mixed the earth and the straw together and worked it on to the walls. They had to work in pairs and help each other and people said they really enjoyed working and chatting with new people.

LESSONS LEARNED

What worked well and what could have been improved?

It's tough doing an earthen build through the winter. Due to other project work, we started a little later than is ideal as working with clay in the cold can sometimes be quite tough. The volunteers were amazing and the provision of gloves and plenty of hot water made it all good.

The earthen building component took longer than expected as it was led by a staff member who had multiple other commitments.

With more time, it would have been interesting to have incorporated more aspects of sustainable building such as natural roofing materials and floors.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

Were people with protected characteristics involved in your project? Please detail groups, numbers and the nature of the involvement. Please describe outreach efforts made to include people with protected characteristics.

Plotholder groups include the homeless charity Fresh Start, the young women support organisation She Scotland, and Project Esperanza - who work with women and families of African heritage living in North Edinburgh. But we've also had local residents form small groups to take on plots, including a friendship group of Kenyan women from Muirhouse and Drylaw, and a collection of older women from Cramond. We are also now welcoming participants from the LEAP recovery program and many more.

PROMOTION

Please attach or send (in electronic format if possible) photographic evidence of delivery of your project - this must be suitable for publication, so not showing faces.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DPfsudnGTVDHhHnHUF2vmobmKsPIkERg?usp=sharing>

(follow the link for lots of great photos related to the build)

- Yes, photos attached
- Photos coming separately
- No Photos

Do you have any quotes from participants we could use or any feedback around participant satisfaction?

“We thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It felt therapeutic to me, stomping in the mud, rolling the mud and hay over, getting to know others, etc.

Our daughter was still 5 when we attended and she says, "It was nice. I liked the soup; and I want to know where do you get the hay from?" 😊 - J

“Sense of shared purpose, community, building something together, meeting people, learning new skills, sharing soup, getting muddy! 🙏” - C

“I only had time to help once. For me, it was a fantastic way of learning some down to earth skills from others (free of charge too), it was fun and meeting like minded great people as well being able to contribute building something which will benefit everyone. Lovely tasty soup from Lisa & tasty bread . We are all being fed too. Good. Interesting conversation

May volunteer a little bit more once we are into Spring time.” - K

“I found the volunteer opportunity via our Lauriston Farm system. It was great, motivating to more communal work and made me stronger with self- confidence.” - E

“Rob^[PDI] I think it was inspiring to see how much we can achieve by working together. Also lovely to meet such nice people for the 1st time.” - G

FUTURE
Will you be able to sustain the initiative started with this project grant beyond this year?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear as yet <input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant (a one off activity)
If yes, please give details of how the project will be continued:
<p>The project has been a community effort to build strong and resilient long term infrastructure to allow a large number of people from very diverse backgrounds, cultures and social strata to come together to ensure a sovereign food supply for North Edinburgh. We are already seeing participants apply for and take on jobs at the farm or develop their growing skills.</p>
SIGN OFF
Your consent
By signing this form, I declare that I am a competent person to give consent to the City of Edinburgh Council to publish, republish or otherwise transmit still and moving images that have been submitted.
I understand that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • my information (including still or moving images and/or audio files will be stored electronically following with data protection guidelines • information will be kept for seven years. We will not use your information/images/files after this time without asking you first • I have the right to withdraw this consent at any time by contacting communityplanning@edinburgh.gov.uk
Completed by: <u>Rob Davidson</u>
Position in group: Farm Coordinator
Date: 23/05/2024
Please return attaching copies of receipts
Return Address communityplanning@edinburgh.gov.uk