

Green Participatory Budgeting Initiative - The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

Help make Edinburgh greener



EDINBURGH COMMUNITY CLIMATE FUND



Final Evaluation

August 2024

• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Background

your
ideas

the
decision

your
VOTE

the
RESULTS

This report provides an analysis of the impact of "The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund," a Green Participatory Budgeting Programme launched by The City of Edinburgh Council in 2023. The programme aims to empower community members in Edinburgh to directly decide on the allocation of a portion of the council's budget towards environmental projects. This initiative supports green projects, fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents towards their local environment, and aligns with the City of Edinburgh Climate Strategy.

Co-produced with representatives from the public, community, and voluntary sectors, the programme distributed £140,000 to eight projects across the city in early 2024. Over two and a half thousand local people participated in the voting process to decide which project were funded, casting over 10,000 votes on 56 applications.

A [report was published](#) in 2023 evaluating the process and key learning.

This report will detail the impact of the projects and the outcomes of the funded projects.

This is Green PB!

Building • Strengthening • Supporting
www.pbscotland.scot/green

Lauriston Farm Community Outdoor Kitchen

The project aimed to expand the facilities in community allotments by increasing the space for communal tool storage and creating a community kitchen to facilitate the preparation and eating of healthy, fresh food in a welcoming community setting. It aimed to build positive habits and perceptions around food growing and consumption while increasing community connection and resilience.



At least 134 households regularly engage on the farm across 36 plots. As many of the households are families, the number of individuals who benefit from the site will be well over 200.

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



Plotholder groups include the homeless charity Fresh Start, the young women's support organisation She Scotland, and Project Esperanza, which work with women and families of African heritage living in North Edinburgh. Local residents in small groups have also taken on plots, including a friendship group of Kenyan women from Muirhouse and Drylaw and a collection of older women from Cramond. The farm is also now welcoming participants from the LEAP recovery program and many more.

The project has been a community effort to build strong and resilient long-term infrastructure. It will 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. The project is already seeing participants apply for and take on jobs at the farm or develop their growing skills

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 the site has a SROI figure of 6.5. That means every £1 invested in the farm is worth £6.5 to society.

[More information about the impact of the project is available online.](#)

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



Building Bricks 4 EdinBRIC



EdinBRIC held events in many parts of the city, speaking with people from varying socio-economic backgrounds. The events raised awareness, educated people, and helped people understand existing sources of support for their particular situation.



Community enthusiasm for the idea was significant, and interest in the subject clear. The variety of organisations and communities looking for help was encouraging that this topic is one where help is really needed.

“Very empowering for households to consider factors prior to taking action, also simplified complex and technical aspects..”

EdinBRIC established a framework for interested community leaders to step forward and get involved in community retrofit and building improvement. The events held educated those who attended in matters as diverse as how to start a group, to building physics, and funding applications.

The project believes its impact could result in the equal vent to operational carbon savings of 70tCO₂.

[More information about the impact of the project is available online.](#)

By building the Retrofit Rover – a display and events kit which fits on a cargo bike – they made resources and a process by which this can be delivered many times over into the future. EdinBRIC’s website and mailing list, along with an events schedule, allows them to reach out to the community and find other leaders who want to use our resources, frameworks and systems to further the outreach and education.



Fresh Start Starter Packs

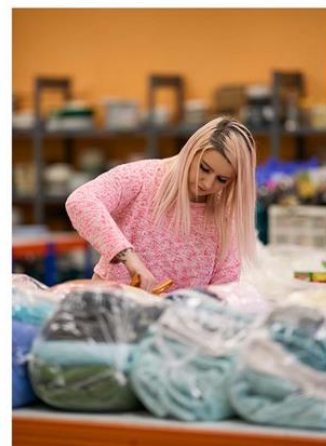
Funding was used to help run the Starter Packs service – it helped increase the amount of goods Fresh Start can store, organise in packs and distribute to people moving on from homelessness. This is an essential ask as the number of families facing extreme hardship is increasing across Edinburgh. Being able to make a home is a crucial step towards supporting tenants to cope with the trauma of their 'homeless' experience, reduce stress and anxiety and improve mental health and well-being. The Starter Packs provide service users with the essential goods they need to set up their home, reducing the stress and financial burden involved in the transition from homelessness to being rehoused.

In 23-24, the starter pack programme diverted 60.5 tons of goods from landfills, extending the life of everyday household goods and reducing the emissions required to produce new ones. A further 14.8 Tons (goods which are not in a good enough conditions) have been diverted through scrap metal and others recycling service.

Over the funding period Fresh Start delivered 17,964 starter pack helping 3492 households. The project will continue on a similar model this year, some of the funding is already in place and our team is continuing to seek further funds.

[More information about the impact of the project is available online](#)

"It has made a massive difference. Not had a cooker for 10 years so have been eating cold foods like sandwiches, we lived in a B&B so could use the microwave only between 6pm-7pm. We have started cooking every day and eat more healthy foods. Thank you



Rhyze Mushrooms Micro Mushroom Farms for 3 Community Cafes

The project aimed to build three miniature mushroom farms for three community cafes in Edinburgh and train volunteers from the community spaces to manage the miniature farms autonomously and grow fresh mushrooms using cafe waste. This would create a circular loop whereby food can be produced sustainably year-round indoors.

The project engaged over 50 people from different parts of Edinburgh on issues of climate change and sustainable food production. The project involved running a series of workshops at the three community cafes. The workshops were focused on mushroom cultivation as a means of creating more sustainable food systems but also included discussion on wider issues of sustainability and food.



The three farms built now belong to the three organisations. Rhyze Mushrooms have committed to supply all three community groups with one year's worth of cultivation supplies to allow them to continue the project at no cost. After that point the groups will supply the cafes with cultivation supplies at cost price to help them keep the project going with minimally low costs

[More information about the impact of the project is available online](#)

Carbon savings from the project are created by displacing other less local and less sustainable food sources. The oyster mushrooms grown would not necessarily be displacing regular button mushrooms. Oyster mushrooms have quite a different texture and are more versatile and can therefore be used more effectively than button mushrooms as meat substitutes. In this instance, they would have significantly higher greenhouse gas reductions.

"The mushroom project has been a very popular focus of volunteer activity at Bridgend. We have been able to introduce visitors and volunteers to the basics of Mushroom propagation and supply interested parties with starter kits when we do inoculation workshops"

The current average harvests from the three farms are as follows:

Bridgend: 10 kg a month > 46.8kg of CO₂ saved
Scran: 4kg a month → 18.72 kg of Co₂ saved
ONC: 6 kg a month → 28.08 kg of Co₂ saved



Porty Community Energy and the Tool Library Cosy Homes and Cargo Bikes



The project made significant strides in community leadership and learning on climate change by engaging volunteers and participants in hands-on activities. The Retrofixers initiative and Cosy Homes workshops provided practical knowledge and fostered a sense of community leadership in implementing sustainable practices. The Cargo Bike Library promoted low-carbon travel, clocking 3,816 miles since its inception, and influenced a behavioural shift towards sustainable transportation among community members.

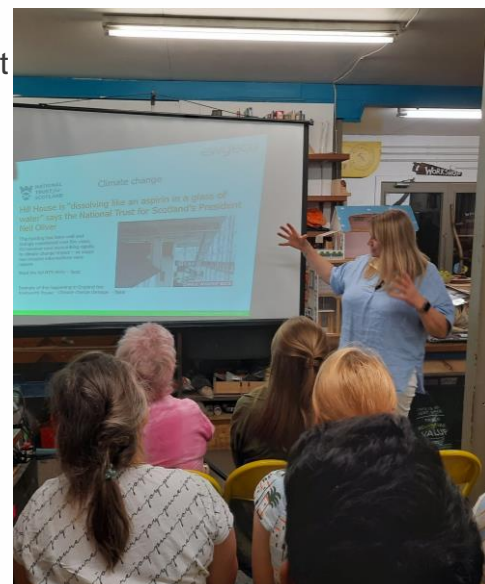
The project also generated sustainable outcomes, such as the establishment of a neighbours' association on Rosefield Place to collectively pursue energy-efficient retrofits. This initiative demonstrated the potential for community-led action in reducing carbon emissions and building resilience against climate change.

[More information about the impact of the project is available online](#)

“Today’s storm is great. There is no wind coming through my sitting room or study windows nor the bottom of my kitchen window [...] Thanks again for all the hard work. You have no idea how nice I was to eat breakfast in my kitchen this morning - thanks again to everyone for all your wonderful help”

Porty Community Energy, in collaboration with the Edinburgh Tool Library, initiated a project aimed at promoting energy efficiency and sustainable transportation within the community.

The project successfully met its aims, engaging 41 volunteers and benefiting 858 participants through various activities. It established a Cargo Bike Library and an Active Travel Hub, which facilitated the reduction of car journeys and promoted low-carbon travel. The practical workshops, including the 'Cosy Homes' series, equipped community members with skills for home energy improvements, such as draught-proofing and insulation.



SHRUB

Wee Spoke Hub



Wee Spoke Hub has established numerous initiatives aimed at fostering community leadership through upskilling volunteers and encouraging inclusive participation. The organisation has focused on providing bike maintenance and repair training, with special sessions designed for women and non-binary individuals to address observed skill gaps. These sessions have resulted in a diverse group of volunteers who are proficient and confident in assisting customers during the weekly Bike DIY sessions.

Funding from the ECCF allowed Wee Spoke Hub to reopen. Since then, it has hosted 45 DIY bike repair sessions, totalling over 150 hours.

A large proportion of our volunteers are members of the LGBTIQ+ community, and we have arranged workshops particularly targeting these groups.

They have passed on numerous second-hand and new bike parts and repaired approximately 100 bikes, facilitating greater use of cycling as a mode of transport and reducing emissions.

The group has also led over 30 hours of group rides, building community members' confidence in cycling and promoting reduced greenhouse gas emissions through increased bicycle use.

The group has also run over 70.5 hours of audience-specific training workshops with 55 total participants.

This is reducing social exclusion from cycling for demographics that are often ostracised from the cycling community, as well as building new skill sets within our volunteer team, consequently improving job prospects. We also introduced a regular Follow the Sun event in which we ride as a group to build a greater sense of an inclusive cycling community which benefits participants' mental and physical wellbeing.

[More information about the impact of the project is available online](#)



“I felt very welcomed and it felt like a judgement-free environment, especially for a woman who is under-represented in this kind of area”



The Edinburgh Remakery - Tech Donation Boxes for Schools



By placing the Tech Donation Boxes in 20 schools across Edinburgh and participating in the whole-school assemblies Edinburgh Remakery has engaged with over 17,000 pupils and staff.

190 devices have been diverted from landfill (or being left in a drawer or cupboard). All these devices have been assessed for their suitability for repair/refurbishment.

½ ton of e-waste has been saved, which equates to about 2 highland cows.

21,000kgs of CO2 has been saved. This is equivalent to 350 trees growing for 10 years, or 1.3million smart phones being charged.


All the devices that we collected were assessed for their suitability for repair/refurbishment. The ones that were not suitable were stripped down, and their parts were used to repair other devices. If this was not possible, we segregated the material even further, and items such as boards containing precious metals were sent off to The Royal Mint, where the gold and other precious metals were extracted and used again.

The project will continue for the 2024/2025 academic year after funding from a separate source has been secured. It is hoped the project will engage with 15 additional schools on the same basis as the original project.


[More information about the impact of the project is available online.](#)


“The project was a great platform to raise the issue of recycling. The younger pupils were curious about the box which led to engaging conversations about sustainability.”

TECH DONATION BOX PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS





EDINBURGH REMAKERY






Welcome to
Boroughmuir High School







20 SCHOOLS COVERED
17,000 PUPILS



DEVICES SAVED
250



WEIGHT OF DEVICES
620 KGS



ESTIMATED CO2 SAVINGS
14,800 KGS

Cargo Bike Movement Food Sharing Project



Cargo Bike Movement has actively participated in 17 events across Edinburgh. Through these events, they engaged with 7114 people, offering conversations and bike trials. These events served as a platform to promote cargo bikes and the broader Cargo Bike Movement, advocating for active travel.

In terms of cargo bike loans, Cargo Bike Movement delivered 687 days of loans this year, currently maintaining active loans with businesses, community groups, and individuals. Beneficiaries of these loans include The Tool Library, Dalry Bike Depot, The Bethany Trust, and the Edinburgh International Festival.

The organisation has made significant contributions to surplus food collections, gathering over 45 tonnes of food this year using cargo bikes. This food was delivered to the Shrub Co-op Food Bank, directly addressing food insecurity. By using cargo bikes, Cargo Bike Movement not only reduced carbon emissions by avoiding cars and vans but also prevented food destined for landfills from contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.